

THE  
SAINTS  
ANCHOR-HOLD,  
IN ALL  
*Storms and Tempests.*  
Preached in sundry  
SERMONS.

And published for the Support  
and Comfort of Gods People, in  
all times of Tryal.

By John Davenport, B. D. sometime  
Minister of Stephens Coleman-street;  
London; and now Pastor of the Church  
of Christ in New-Haven in New-England.

Heb. 6. 18. Lay hold upon the Hope set before us,  
19. which hope we have, as an Anchor of  
the soul, both sure and stedfast, and  
which entreth into that within the vail.  
20. Whither the forerunner is for us entered,  
even Jesus, made an High-Priest for  
ever, after the order of Melchisedech.

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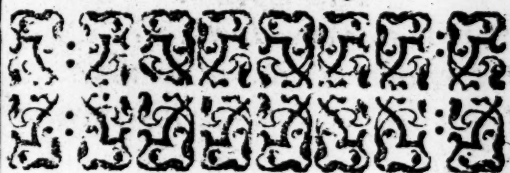
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The  
P R E F A C E.

To the Christian Reader.

**A**s the whole Creation hath  
groaned ever since its  
original subjection unto  
Vanity, earnestly expect-  
ing the manifestation of the Sons  
of God: So more especially in  
these latter days the travelling  
pains thereof have encreased, as  
presages of its approaching Deli-  
verance. The vanity of it hath  
alwayes been great, but the Experi-  
mental Discoveries thereof never  
a 2 more

## The Epistle.

*more than now. In this case it is the wisdom of a Christian to secure to himself an Interest in a portion as sufficient and permanent as Jehovah that never changeth: A greater than which cannot be procured: This may, and a less will never satisfy: By this men live indeed, and in this is the Life of a Christian. That the Lords Portion are his people, addeth nothing to him that is also sufficient to himself; but, that the Lord is their Portion, is all in all to them. And this is the foundation of their hope and Comfort. For here we are all embarked in a Vessel, sometimes caught with winds, sometimes covered with Waves, and should soon be at our wits end, but for this sure and stedfast anchor which entreth into that within the Vail.*

*Now that Portion, and this Hope grounded on it, are the Churches, and a Christians support in the midst*

## The Epistle.

*midst of their lamentations : For the Church at this time was driven from Jerusalem, Zion, Temple, Temple-Ordinances, and native Place of residence, greatly afflicted and tossed with Tempests. This is only remaining, that she hath God for her portion, and Hope for her Anchor, never to be taken from her. And both these are the Subject of the ensuing Discourse, seasonable and suitable at all times, especially in these last moments of the last Days, in which God is shaking Heaven, Earth, and Sea, in order to the appearance of the Desire of all Nations.*

*As touching the Author of this Treatise (in whose heart the Text was written by the finger of God, before the Discourse was penned by his own hand) His Piety, Learning, Gravity, Experience, Judgment, do not more commend him to all*

## The Epistle.

that know him, than this Work  
of his may commend it self to  
them that read it: And the con-  
sideration of the two kinges on  
\* *Valde sunt cognatæ* which the Text  
*Sorores, Fides & Spes* turneth, Faith,  
*Dr. Par. in Heb. 6.* and Hope, their  
near cognation, concomitance,  
usefulness, necessity, power, com-  
fort, the first exciting the second,  
the one commensurate with the  
other, is enough to procure from  
thee the expence of a little time,  
to see and weigh what is here spo-  
ken of these most necessary Helps  
to Eternal Happiness, which will  
never relinquish the Believer, till  
they have resigned him up to the  
glorious Vision and fruition of the  
Objects believed in, and hoped  
for, there leaving the Soul to the  
everlasting exercise of never fai-  
ling Love to God and the Saints  
in Glory.

That this holy Faith and Hope  
in

The E pistle.

*in God, together with fervent Love  
to God, and one to another, may  
daily flourish, and be confirmed  
in the hearts and lives of all the  
Saints on earth, till they enter  
upon their purchased Possession  
(which is the end of their Faith  
and Hope, to the praise of the  
Glory of God) in Glory, is the  
heartly desire and Prayer of*

Thy Fellow-Brethren

in this Faith and Hope,

*William Hooke.*

*Joseph Caryl.*

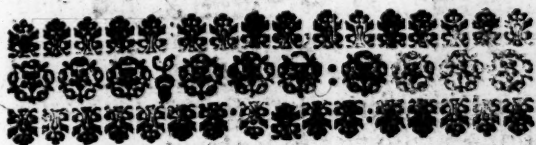


## Errata.

Page 19. Lines 12, and 13. read *Causally*,  
p. 66. l. ult. r. him. p. 76. l. 26. r. resolved.  
p. 126. l. 13. r. quietness. p. 130. l. ult. r.  
grounds p. 134. l. 24. r. There. P. 145.  
l. 18 r. brought. p. 151. l. 16. r. notice. p. 164.  
l. 25. r. *lust*. p. 204. l. 4. r. *thereof*.



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The Saints

# ANCHOR-HOLD.

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Lam. 3. 24. *The Lord is my portion, saith my soul, therefore will I hope in him.*



His Book is, according to the judgement of a godly learned \* Writer, an Abridgment of all *Jeremie's* Sermons from the

\* Mr. Broughton. 13th. year of *Jeftas*, unto the 4th. of *Jeakim*; and that Book which God commanded *Jeremy* to write, and to cause *Baruch* to read it publikely, upon the day of a Fast, kept in the ninth  
B moneth

•• moneth of the first  
 See the story at year of *Iehojakim*.  
 large, in *Jer. 36.* which afterward  
*Iehudi* read unto  
 the King, sitting by a fire, in his winter  
 house, who was so far from repenting,  
 that, when he had read three or four  
 leaves of it, he cut it with a penknife,  
 and cast it into the fire, till all was  
 consumed, and rejected the interces-  
 sion of some of his Princes, that he  
 would not burn it, and he command-  
 ed to lay hold upon *Jeremy* and *Bar-  
 uch*: But God hid them. Whereup-  
 on the Lord commanded *Jeremy* to  
 write the Book again, with Additi-  
 ons, which the same Writer thinks, was  
 this Chapter, which consisteth of a  
 threefold Alphabet in the Hebrew.  
 The Prophet, having discharged his  
 offices, in labouring to convince the  
 Jews of their sins, and to bring them  
 to repentance, when he found not the  
 success he desired, he falls to lament-  
 ing and weeping, for their pride and  
 obstinacy in sin, and teacheth them  
 also how to lament their own misery  
 in Captivity; and, because there was  
 among



among them a basket of good figges, he teacheth them how to exercise faith and hope in the midst of their sorrows: Among other passages, my Text hath a tendency thereunto, which admits a double consideration: 1. As a part of a Lamentation. 2. As an expression of a free spirit. Accordingly I shall handle it, first, as a part of a Lamentation. In verse 17, 18. you may see their deep dejection and despondency; *I said my strength and my hope is perished from the Lord.* In vers. 19, 20, 21. you may see how, from the good fruit of their affliction, in humbling them, they gather hope. In vers. 22, 23. they can see mercy in God towards them in their affliction. In my Text, they are as men that find rest, after their dangers and tossings at Sea, by casting Anchor upon firm ground, in a safe Harbour. The Doctrinal note I collect from the words so considered, is this:

*Doct.* Though it may be the case of true believers to be greatly dejected for a time, yet, even then, God doth support their spirits, and quicken their

faith and hope in him. To clear this point, we must prove two things. 1. that it may be the case of true believers to be greatly dejected, for a time. This may be abundantly confirmed, both by the Scriptures in the examples of *Job, David, Hezekiah, Asaph, Heman*, and of *Christ* himself, in the Garden, and on the Crosse, and by reasons of sundry sorts.

R. 1. From God himself, sometimes with-holding the light of his countenance from true believers, Then it is with them, as it is with the earth, which would be covered with darknesse, coldnesse, and deadnesse, if the light and influence of the Sun were with-drawn from it. He is the God of all comfort, *2 Cor. 1. 3.* without him no true comfort can be had. Sometimes he creates darknesse in the Soul; then it is filled with fear, and amazement, and disquietment. And thus he doth, for holy and good ends, 1. To conform Believers to Christ, as members to their head, *Rom. 8. 29.* 2. To inform them, where their life is hid, viz. with Christ, in God, *Col. 3. 3.* and

and that Christ, the last Adam, is made a quickning Spirit. 1 Cor. 15. 45. that thereby he may quicken his People in God, who quickneth the dead, when themselves had not only a sentence of death, in their bodies, as Paul had, 2. Cor. 1. 9. but also a sense of death in their soules, as Heman had, Psalme 88. 5. 3. To reforme them. Partly, for correction of their unthankfulness for former comforts received from him, and for their not improving them unto the ends for which he gave them. As a father, when he seeth his child doth but play with the candle which he afforded him to work by, takes it from him, and leaves him in the dark. Partly, for prevention of spiritual pride. 2 Cor. 12. 7. Of spiritual wantonnesse, and self confidence, Psal. 30. 6, 7. Of carnal security, Cant. 5. 6. and sundry other distempers.

R. 2. From Satan, that envious one, who, as in the beginning he sought to cast Adam out of Paradise, and to bereave him of his happinesse in communion with God, so now, finding believers in the Kingdom of grace,

which consists in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit, when he cannot deprive them of their righteousness, will endeavour to disturb their peace, and damp their joy, knowing, that when they performe duties uncomfortably, they do them weakly and but by halves. To this end: 1. He strives to hide from them those promises that might comfort them, when they have most need and use of them, and he sometimes prevails herein. *Heb. 12. 5.* 2. He suggests any word that may terrefie them, and presents to their memory and thoughts former sins, to amaze them. 3. He presents all things unto them in false glasses; the comforts of God, in a diminishing glasse, that God may seem to them lesse merciful, lesse gracious than he is, and the promises of God lesse free, lesse general than they are; that all the consolations of God may seem small things to them, *Job 15. 11.* but he presents to them their sins in a multiplying glasse, that they may seem more, and greater than they are; their sins, as impardonable; their  
mise

miseries, as intolerable, incurable; their state, as desperate. 4. He useth his instruments to deal with them, as the Philistins did with *Isaack*, whose wells they stopped up, to make unprofitable to them those wells of Salvation, from whence believers might draw waters of consolation. Thus he used *Saul* to banish *David* from the ordinances, and wicked men to insult and reproach him; saying, *Where is now thy God? Psal. 42. 3.* So others, to twit them with their Religion, when they are in distresse, saying, where are now your prayers, your hearing, reading, meditating, conferring, your conscientious and exact walking, your confidence in God? You live more dejectedly than others, and are as fearful, as others, to die. Thus they thrust, as it were, swords and daggers into their bones, to kill their comforts, as *David* there complained, verse 10.

R. 3. From themselves: 1. Sin presseth down their spirits, and hinders their cheerful progress in a Christian course, as weight doth runners  
B. 4. in

in a race, *Heb. 12. 1.* Sorrow in the heart brings it down, especially, when guilt of sin is added to it. When the shoulder is out of joynt, it cannot bear its own pain, much lesse other burthens. So it is with the soul, a wounded spirit who can bear? *Prov. 18. 14.* 2. Their spirit sometimes suffers from their bodies, by sympathy; as in melancholy, which so darkens their imagination, that every thing seems dark to them, and so sowres their spirits, that every thing seems bitter to them, and so fills them with fears and suspicions, that every thing affrights them. 3. Sometimes passion so prevaieth in them, that the higher faculties of the soul are subjected to the affections, which so bemist the understanding, that it cannot judge of things according to right reason: The conscience becomes suspensive, and wavering, and the memory, like a leaking vessel, lets the grounds of comfort run out, and be forgotten: 4. Sometimes spiritual gifts of grace are not exercised, but as the body growes listless when some dull humour seizeth

seizeth, faith is oppressed by unbelief, hope with fears; they do not put forth themselves to wrestle with God, and stir up themselves to take hold on him, but yield unto every temptation and discouragement. Thus you see, that it may be the case of believers to be greatly dejected, for a time.

The second thing to be cleared, is; That though it be thus with true believers for a time; yet then God will do two things for them.

1. He will secretly support them so that they may say as *Paul* did, in 2 Cor. 4. 8, 9. *We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair, persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.* God dealt with the basket of good figges, in Captivity; as *Christ* did with *Peter*, who first let him see his own weaknesse, in the water, then quickned him to cry unto him for help, and then stretched forth his hand and upheld him. *Mat.* 14. 30, 31. So the Lord left the Church so far that they complained my hope is perished from the Lord, yet speedily raised

them up in sight of his mercy to trust and hope in him. In like manner, he supports believers.

R. 1. From Gods unchangeablenesse in his love, and unweariednesse in doing them good. *Isa. 64. 5. and 40. 27, 28, 29, 31.*

R. 2. From Gods faithfulness in his covenant and promises *Isa. 54. 8. 9. Psal. 37. 24. Heb. 13. 5. 2.* He will quicken their faith, to look unto himself for relief and comfort, in such times, *2 Chron. 20. 12. Psal. 121. 1, 2. Jon. 2. 2, 4.* for these reasons:

R. 1. From the efficacy of the spirit of faith in them. As the needle in the Compasse, being touched with the Load-stone, though it may be moved and shaken this way and that, for a time, yet resteth not till it point to the North; so the soul, being touched with the spirit of faith, though it may be forced, by Temptation, from its bent, for a time, yet it hath no rest, till it stand God-ward. They may by Temptations be as sheep driven from mountaine to mountaine, and forget their resting place. *Jer. 50. 6.* But  
the



the spirit of faith in them will cause them to return unto God, and to say, as *David Psal. 116. 7.* Return unto thy rest, O my soul. Believers are like *Noahs Dove*, that finding no rest for the soles of its feet, in the Deluge, returned unto the Ark. Other men will, like the Raven, be soon satisfied with other things.

R. 2. From the suitable operation of Gods spirit in them unto Gods end in afflicting them. Gods end, in afflicting his children, is to drive them from all other things unto himself. For he corrects them for their good, *Heb. 12. 10.* And it's good for them to draw near to God, *Psal. 73. 28.* When afflictions work us thereunto, it is from the spirits sanctifying operation in them. For, 1. afflictions cannot work thus of themselves, but rather set men further off from God by discontentment with his providence, because it crosseth their carnal affections. And, 2. the soul of it self is apt to misgivings, in such cases, and to have hard thoughts of God. And 3. Satan takes such occasions to breed and increase

crease a distance and division between the soul and God. Therefore it must be from the sanctifying operation of Gods spirit in them and with them, when they work this good. *Rom. 8.28.*

*Use. 1. For Instruction. 1. Here we may see the difference between believers and others, in their dejected condition. 1. Believers have the spirit of faith in them, whereby the soul, though it be over-borne by passion and Temptation, for a time, yet it will worke it self into freedom again, as oil will be uppermost. The spirit, as a spring, will be cleansing it self more and more, from that mudde that is in it. But the heart of unbelievers is like a standing poole, where that which is cast into it rests. They are like the Sea, where trouble and unquietnesse are in their proper place, *Isa. 57. 20.* True rest and peace are for ever separated from sin in any soul, till the breach between God and the soul be made up by faith in Christ. 2. Believers have an interest in God, and he in them, through Jesus Christ. Hence they are kept, as in a Garrison,*

by

by his mighty power, through faith, unto salvation, *1 Pet. 1. 5.* through the intercession of Christ, *Luk. 22. 3.* by the spirit of Christ dwelling with them, and who shall be in them and abide with them for ever: So that they shall not be left comfortlesse. *John. 14. 16, 17, 18.* Hereupon *Paul* triumphed, in *Rom. 8. 35, &c.* Where he puts the question about persons, and answers about things, neither shall separate them from the love, which either Christ bears to them, or they to Christ. Sin cannot separate them from Christ's love to them, because he hath more than conquered it, by his own power. Tribulation cannot separate believers from the love they bear to Christ, because they shall more than conquer it, by the power of Christ. It is not our hold of God and Christ, but God's and Christ's hold of us that keeps us to him. The root bears us up, not we the root. *Rom. 11. 18.* This *Asaph* acknowledged unto God, when his feet were almost gone, his steps had well nigh slipped; saying, *Neverthelesse I am continually*

14. *The Saints Anchor-Hold,*

*ly with thee, thou hast holden me by my right hand, Psal. 73. 2, 23.* But unbelievers are without Christ, and without God in the World. *Eph. 2. 12.* Therefore when their creature-comforts fail them, they are as a ship tossed in the Sea without a Pylot, and without an Anchor, which soon is bulged upon Rocks, or falleth upon quick sands, having no God to guide or support them.

2. Hence we may learn how to carry our selves toward afflicted dejected Christians. Judge mercifully and wisely of poor weaklings. *Psal. 41. 1.* men are apt, through want of wisdom and love, to mis-apprehend the causes of their dejectednesse. It is the lesse to be wondred at, that an heathen King mis-interpreted the dejected countenance of *Nehemiah*, *Neh. 2. 2.* seeing godly and wise *Eli*, mis-censured *Hannah*, as a distempered woman, when she was in bitterness of spirit, *1 Sam. 1. 14, 15.* and *Jobs* friends mis-judged him for his afflictions, and men generally mis-construed Christs sufferings, *Isa. 53. 4, 5.* They are not alwayes the best that are merriest,

merriest, nor they the merriest in heart that are so in the face. Nor are they alwayes of the weakest faith, or spirit, who are sometimes dejected, as we see *Ioshuah* was, in *Josh. 7*. Therefore be not rash, or harsh in censuring the dejected; but rather worke with God for their support and comfort. Two things are required hereunto; knowledge, and goodnesse, *Rom. 15. 14*. The first will make you able, the second willing to be helpful to such. Labour to abound in both,

1. In knowledge both of the word, *Col. 3. 16*, and of the temper of the party, that you may speak to them suitably, and seasonably, *Isa. 56. 4*.
2. In goodnesse, to pity them, to pray for them, and to set them in joynt. *Gal. 6. 1*.

2. As for your selves, beware that you mis-judge not your own estate toward God, under such dejections, but know that, if ever you had any clear testimony of Gods love to you, in *Jesus Christ*, the love of God toward you in *Christ* is unchangable, it is an everlasting love, *Jer. 31. 3*. Therefore

fore hold the confidence and rejoycing of your hope firme unto the end, *Heb. 3. 6.* and say, with the Church, in *Mich. 7. 8.* *When I sit in darknesse, the Lord shall be a light unto me.*

*Use 2.* For Admonition. Take heed of placing your comfort too much in the creature, which being subject to change, and inconstancy, will be apt to breed disquietment. Vexation inseparably followes vanity, when vanity is not apprehended to be where it is. In what degree any are lifted up in expectation of satisfying good from creatures, or overjoyed with the comforts of them, in that degree they are dejected in the dis-appointment of their hope, and distressed in the losse of creature-contentments. Inordinacy of affections imbitters all such afflictions. Hence arise those bitter complaints; I had settled my contentment and hope in such a friend, or relation, but now they are gone, and with them all my joy is gone. Woe is me, I am undone. Therefore *Agur* prayed wisely, in *Prov. 30. 8.* *Remove far from me vanity and lies, i. e. vain and*

and false apprehensions, whereby the affections are too strongly fixed upon things that are vain, and lying, promising that contentment, which they cannot yield; confidence in vanities makes them Idols, and makes the heart vain, like the things it relies upon, *Psal.* 115. 8. They shall find continual disquietment who walk in a vain shadow, *Psal.* 39. 6. The best remedy against this is, by dwelling in the secret of the most High, to abide under the shadow of the Almighty. *Psal.* 91. 1, 2.

*Lam.* 3. 24. *The Lord is my portion, &c.*

The words having been considered as they lie in the context, as a part of a Lamentation; we proceed to handle them as in my Text they hold forth the expression of a free spirit, that is, of a spirit set at liberty from those sad perplexities, wherein it had been intangled, and held under deep dejection, and despondency. The Text, thus considered, containeth the Anchor-Hold of a tossed afflicted spirit: where-

wherein three particulars are to be noted. 1. An Assertion, *The Lord is my portion.* 2. A Proof of it, *saieth my soul.* 3. A Confectary, or inference from the premisses; *Therefore will I hope in him.* I shall speak onely of the first, at this time: *The Lord is my portion.* חֵלֶק, a part, or portion, is not to be taken here in the Mathematical or common use of that word, as denoting a part of a whole as it is frequently in Scripture, when that part of estate, which Parents give their children, is called their portion, *Gen. 31. 14.* and that part of the spoil, which is the Souldiers share, is called their portion, *Gen. 14. 24.* and that *dimensum* of food, which is allowed unto any, is called their portion, *Dent. 18. 8.* and the almes given to the poor is called their portion, *Eccl. 11. 2.* For God is not parted, or divided, and distributed among his people, so as one hath one part of him, another another part of God; but every one hath whole God wholly; as the whole Sun shines to every one, in which respect God is called a *Sun* *Psal.*



*Psal.* 84. 11. Therefore God is said to be his peoples portion, not in a comparative, but in an absolute sense, God himself is theirs, a suitable and all sufficient good to them. They have not onely gifts and all good things from him, but himself also to be their God, in the Covenant of Grace, through Jesus Christ. He is their portion though *not formally*, yet in two senses: 1. *Objectively*, as he is their ultimate end, and chief good. 2. *Causally*, as he gives, together with himself, in Christ, all good to them. The Doctrinal note shall be this:

*Doct.* All true Believers have such a blessed interest in God, as renders him their portion. It is the voice of faith, to say, *The Lord is my portion*: Others may say, The Lord is an all-sufficient portion: But onely Believers can truly say, *The Lord is my portion*. Because onely faith interests a man in God, and appropriates him to him. This faith doth by a double act. 1. By a direct act, whereby true believers see in God those properties, which are required in a satisfying

fyng portion. They are three :

1. All-sufficiency. 2. Perpetuity. 3. Safety in placing his happinesse and full contentment there. All these the Scripture declare to be in God alone

1. Sufficiency, *Gen. 17. 1. Psal. 84. 11.* 2 Perpetuity. It tells us, that *he is without shadow of change, Jam.*

*1. 17.* and that *he will never fail, nor forsake his people, Heb. 13. 5.*

3. Safety, in placing all our contentment and happinesse in him alone, *Psal. 144. 15.* 2. By a reflected act

of faith, a believer seeth his peculiar right and interest in God, as his portion.

Hence David said, *The Lord is the portion of mine Inheritance, and*

*of my Cup, Psal. 16. 5.* and, *Thou art my portion O Lord, Psal. 119. 57.* and

*Asaph, Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth*

*that I desire, besides thee:* And again, *God is the strength of my heart, and*

*my portion for ever, Psal. 73. 25,*

*26.* To clear this, two things must be added : 1. The grounds, where-

upon the Saints have claimed this interest in God, as their portion. 2. The use

use they have made of God, under this notion and relation. For the first, Their title unto God, as their portion, is founded: 1. In Gods voluntary and free donation of himself to them, in the Covenant of Grace, whereby both they become his portion. *Deut. 32. 9. The Lords portion is his people, and he becomes their portion; The portion of Jacob is the former of all things: The Lord of Hosts is his Name, Jeremiah 10. 16.* An act so done, by one that is, *Sui juris*, is a strong binding act, as *Peter* argued in the case of *Ananias*, *Acts 5. 4.* It was free and deliberate and therefore exceedingly dishonorable to break it. God stands much upon his honour in this; *Psal. 89. 34. My Covenant will I not break. And Psal. 111. 5. He will ever be mindful of his Covenant.* 2. This donation is confirmed sundry wayes: 1. By Oath, *Psal. 89. 35. Once have I sworn by my holiness. Again, in Psal. 105. 9. He remembered his Oath unto Isaac,* The Covenant of Grace, whereby God gives himself to be his peoples  
God

God and portion, *Micah* saith, *God hath sworn unto our Fathers from the dayes of old, Micah. 7. ult.* Which also *Zachary* declares to be performed when he sent Christ, *Luke 1. 73.*

2. By Seals: As *Circumcision* is called a seal of the righteousness, which is by faith, *Rom. 4. 11.* because it externally sealed the Covenant, whereby God becomes the God of his people, *Gen. 17. 7, 11.* So it is, with both the Sacraments of the New Testament, by parity of reason. 3. By marriage unto Christ, *Hos. 2. 19.*

20. Agreements upon marriage are firme, because upon rational consideration. A consideration inserted adds weight to a Deed and Covenant. The consideration is, that we should be joyned unto the Lord Jesus, and then, all the promises of God, in him, are *Yea and Amen* to us, in him, *2 Cor. 1. 20.* And Christs God and Father is our God and portion, *John 20. 17.*

4. By a recovery, after judgement, if I may so speak, when, after they are fallen into Gods displeasure, and returned to him, with repentance for  
and

and from their sins; and renewing their faith in Christ, they have renewed their taking hold of the Covenant, and have pleaded it with God, and their plea hath been accepted. Thus did *Moses* for *Israel*, after they had sinned, in the matter of the Golden Calf, *Exod.* 32. 10. 13. and the *Israelites* for themselves *Isa.* 63. 10, 16, 17, 19. The second thing to be shewn is, what use the Saints have made of their right and interest in God, as their portion: They have made use of him thus, both for themselves, and others. 1. For themselves: 1. To glory in God; *This God is our God. Psal.* 48. ult. 2. To delight themselves in the Lord, in confidence of his goodnesse toward them, in the midst of Temptations, *Psal.* 37. 4. Whence followeth a rowling themselves upon him in all their ways and difficulties, *vers.* 5. and a patient waiting upon God in delays, with hope of a good issue, *vers.* 7. 2. For others, whether they be friends or enemies, or of a middle sort. 1. Friends, A poor believer can pleasure his  
-richest

richest friends out of this his portion, his God. This is a Prophet's and a righteous man's reward, *Math. 10. 41.* Thus *Paul* abundantly recompensed all his friends and well-willers out of his portion, *Phil. 4. 19.* *My God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Jesus Christ.*

2. Enemies: In Jesus Christ all believers have sufficient help from God against all sorts of enemies, and can, in an holy, manner challenge them to do their worst, and triumph over them, before the battail, upon this assurance.

*My God will help me ; therefore I shall not be confounded, Isa. 50. 7, 8,*

9. Other men are strong in men, in armes, in shipping, in fortifications, &c. a believer hath all in God, he is strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, *Eph. 6. 10.*

3. A middle sort; *Laban* fared the better for *Jacob*; *Potiphar*, *Pharaoh*, and all *Egypt*, for *Joseph*: The *Sodomites* for *Lot*: The *Mariners*, and all that were in the Ship, for *Paul*, *Acts 27.*

24. The world for the Saints, for the holy seed are מצור the props that shoar

shoar up the places where they live, that the wrath of God doth not ouer-flow, and over-whelm them.

*Isa. 6. 13,*

*Use. 1.* For Instruction: Hence learn to behold and admire the excellency, and happinesse of every true believer in his portion. The All-sufficient God is their portion. His greatness, power, mercy, grace, goodness, faithfulness, forgiveness, justice, all are for them; and, that they may possesse him, as their portion, he gives them his son, to be theirs, through faith, and with him all things, *1 Cor. 3, 21, 22, 23.* Thus, *The brother of low degree is exalted, Jam. 1. 9.* He hath the best portion that God can give, and upon the best assurance that God can make, *Heb. 6. 18.* Hence *David* calleth such the excellent ones, *Psal. 16. 3.* He had conversed with rich men, great men, wise men, after the flesh; yet he called none of them, the excellent ones. He well knew that the righteous is more excellent than his neighbour, *Prov. 12. 26.*

*Use 2:* For exhortation: 1. Generally, to all; to make out for this portion. To this end, wait upon God in his Ordinances with thirsting souls: It will not be in vain, *Isa.* 55. 1, 2, 3. *Prov.* 8. 34, 35. For thereby, either it shall be cleared unto you that the Lord is your portion, or the Lord will become your portion. And he is so unto them, in whom faith is wrought in Christ by the Spirit, in the Ministry of the Gospel. They that can say to Christ, with *Thomas*, *My Lord and my God*, *Joh.* 20. 28. may also say to God, with *David*, in *Psal.* 142. 5. *O Lord, thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.* This is the priviledge of those, who answer Gods call, by joyning to him in Covenant. So saith the Lord, *I entred into Covenant with thee, and thou becamest mine*, *Ezek.* 16. 8. And again, in *Hos.* 2. 23. *I will say unto them which were not my people, Thou art my people, and they shall say, Thou art my God.*

To perswade you hereunto: Consider, 1. Every man desires to have  
the



the best, for his portion in other things, in houses, lands, food, apparel, cattle. But this portion is simply absolutely the best. This Christ teacheth, in *Luke. 16. 12.* This he calls our own, those *another mans.* When a man views houses, or surveys land, or tells money for another man, his heart is not so affected with them, as when he views, surveys, tells for himself. Propriety draws and engages the heart to that wherein a man hath a property, though it be but mean and worthlesse, and carrieth the heart after it; much more, when propriety and a most worthy property meet together; as *David* found this to be, *Psal. 4. 6, 7. 2.* The misery of those that have not this portion *Eph. 2. 12.* Little, or rather, no cause have such to blesse themselves in their worldly portions and possessions, as worldly men are apt to do, *Psal. 49. 18.* For they *have their portion onely in this life*, which is but a vapour: But believers are happy in their portion, in God, both in, and after this life: For they *shall behold his face in righteousness, and shall be satisfied*

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tified, when they awake with his likeness, *Psal.* 17, 14, 15. Attend therefore, in time, to the counsel of Christ, in *Rev.* 3. 17. 18.

2. Specially, To believers; To behave themselves as it becomes those, who have God for their portion. That you may so do, 1. Professedly avouch God to be your portion, *Deut.* 26. 17. This is done two wayes, 1. When you set your love upon him, with such an esteem of him, as is meet for such a portion. *Where a mans treasure is, there will his heart be also, Matth.* 6. 21. Let God be your treasure, when you look upon all things in the world, single out those that you account most amiable, desirable; then ascend, in your thoughts to heaven, and contemplate all the excellencies there, the rivers of pleasure, the blessed fellowship of Saints in glory; each of them as dear to another, as if all relations of husbands, and wives, of parents, and children, and friends, were in every one of them; yet let God and Christ be above them all. So did *Asaph, Psal.* 73. 25. So will every one that  
knows

knows Gods name aright, *Psal. 91. 14. Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.* 2. When you are content to part with all, to enjoy him alone. A maid will say of a man whom she loves, I will have him, though I beg my bread with him. A man will lay out his estate, in suit, for his own. 3. When you live in the world with affections free from worldly ingagements, as Pilgrims, whose hearts are at home, when their feet are traveling abroad. 2. Possesse and use, and injoy God, as your portion. Thus, 1. Live upon God, as the Israelites in *Canaan* did upon their lots and inheritances: Live upon Gods favour, in Christ, *Psal. 30. 5.* And upon his promises, *Isa. 38. 16.* Live by the faith of the Son of God, *Gal. 2, 20.* fetching all your comfort thence, 2. Walk with God, *Gen. 5. 24.* and work in God, *Joh. 3. 21.* marry in the Lord, live unto the Lord, exalting his ends, and rules, in all things. 3. Cast all your care up-

on him, *1 Pet. 5. 7.* you may try men in smaller things, before you trust them with greater; especially, if they be strangers. But it is dishonourable to God, if you do not, at the first, trust him with all that you are, and have. When mens hearts sink in every danger, it is from a defect, either of faith, or in faith. See how Christ reprov'd this in *Peter, Math. 14. 30, 31.* *David's* first recourse was to God, and what ever means he used, he looked up to him, *Psal. 5. 3. 4.* Live contentedly, when you enjoy God in his Ordinances, without covetousnesse, *Heb. 13. 5.* and without discontentednesse because of outward afflictions, or wants. *David* as he was the sweet singer of *Israel*, so he expressed a sweet frame of spirit, in *2 Sam. 23. 5.* *He hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things and sure: this is all my Salvation, and all my desire, &c.* 5. Make up all your happinesse in God. A worldly man, when he views his houses, lands, cattle, barns filled with corn, &c. his heart is cheered

cheared, like that rich fool in *Luke* 12. 19. But see the vanity of that joy, in the answer of God to him, ver. 20. But a true believer hath true cause of rejoycing in his portion, having such an estate in God, and Christ, and the Covenant, that he shall want nothing, *Psal.* 23. 1: his downyings and up-risings, himself and his children are well provided for: what though his estate lyeth not in lands, or monies, or plenty of corn and cat-tle? he hath that which is better, for his portion. A believer is a Citizen of heaven; there is his inheritance; things on earth are added to him, onely *pro viatico*, while he is tra-vailing thitherward.

*Lam.* 3. 24. *Saith my Soul.*

Having spoken of the Assertion, *the Lord is my portion*; we are now, with Christ's assistance, to speak to the proof of it, *saith my Soul*. The Church proveth that the Lord is their portion, by their souls saying it. Where note, 1. The Principle of this speech, *their soul*, which sheweth that there is a mental as well as a vocal speaking:

*The fool saith in his heart, there is no God, Psal. 14. 1.* when his tongue speaketh and professeth the contrary, *Tit. 1. 16.* 2. That, by an act of the soul reflexed upon it self, they knew what their soul said. So *David, in Psal. 16. 2. O my soul, thou hast said unto Jehovah, thou art my Lord.* 3. That the use they make hereof is, to prove two things: 1. That the Lord is their portion. 2. That they know that the Lord is their portion. 1. To prove that the Lord is their portion, they argue thus: What the soul saith is a mans portion, that is his portion. But my soul saith, the Lord is my portion. Therefore the Lord is my portion. 2. To prove that they know that the Lord is their portion, they argue thus. What a man knoweth that his soul saith is his portion, that he knoweth to be his portion. But I know that my soul saith, the Lord is my portion; therefore I know that the Lord is my portion. In like manner, *David* putting up this petition, *Preserve me, O God,* presseth it by this motive, *for in thee do I trust,* and he proveth that he trusteth in God,

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by an Apostrophe, a turning of his speech, to his soul, *O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, thou art my God.* And this he confirmeth from the testimony of his own soul and conscience, *Psal. 16. 1, 2.* and thence inferred; *The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my Cup, ver. 5. q.d.* The Lord is my land and revenue, and food, he supplies all, and is himself above all, better than all, unto me.

D. When a believer knoweth that his soul saith, The Lord is his portion, he hath from thence a clear proof that the Lord is his portion. For the proving of this point, two things must be declared.

1. That a true believer may know that his soul saith, The Lord is his portion. David knew it, when he said, *O God! my soul trusteth in thee, Psal. 17. 1.* He knew that he trusted in God, as one trusteth in his treasure; and in *Psal. 84. 2.* *My heart and my flesh cryeth out for the living God.* As, when an house is on fire, and all is in danger to be lost, the owner crieth out, oh, let me have my

caskets of jewels, my box of evidences, they are my treasure, the principal of my estate, I am not undone, unless I lose them. And then, as his desire is ardent, so his expectation is earnest for them, looking when they shall be delivered to him. Saith he, have you them? have you found them? As the Church said to the daughters of Jerusalem, concerning her beloved, *Cant.* 5. 8. and 3. 3. and, as any hope appeareth, he is the more encouraged to wait, yet still watching and observing if he can get the sight of them. So *David*, *My soul waiteth for the Lord, more than they that watch for the morning: I say, more than they that watch for the morning, Psal.* 130. 6. And, as *David* knew thus that the Lord was his portion; so may other believers, as *Paul* argues, in a like case, from *David's* example, *2 Cor.* 4. 13. From parity of reason, seeing we have the same helps as he had.

R. 1. From the proper excellency, or excellent property of the reasonable soul, that it can reflect, and dis-



discern its own internal acts; much more the renewed soul. 1 Joh. 2. 3.

R. 2. From the office and power of conscience, to testify what is within a man. This the apostle notes in natural men, Rom. 2. 15. and in believers, 1 Joh. 3. 20, 21.

R. 3. From the spirit of God joyn-ing with the renewed spirits of believers, Rom. 8. 16. and 9. 1, 2. *My conscience bearing me witnesse in the Holy Ghost.* And the Holy Spirit brings into the soul a self-evidencing light, whereby he doth manifest unto the renewed soul, that it is himself, and no delusion, who testifieth to us our interest in God. Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit, 1 Joh. 4. 13. For the Spirit is given for this end, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God, 1 Cor. 2. 11.

2. That a believer, from his souls saying, the Lord is his portion, hath a good proof that the Lord is his portion. So the Church, in Psal. 33. 20. from knowledge that their soul wait-

eth

eth for the Lord, proves, that he is their help and their shield, and from thence they infer, in ver. 21. *Our heart shall rejoyce in him, because we have trusted in his holy Name.* So David proved his interest in God, by his souls thirsting for him, *Psal. 63. 1.* and, by his souls following hard after him, ver. 8. The same holds in other believers also.

R. 1. Because the souls saying, the Lord is my portion, is the answering of the soul unto God, calling his Elect effectually, by the ministry of the Gospel, out of the World and sin and self, unto himself, in Jesus Christ. There is an outward calling by the ministry of man onely, of which the Prophet speaks, in *Hos. 11. 7.* *Though they called them to the most High, yet none would exalt him.* This is ineffectual, unto spiritual conversion, of it self, without the quickening efficacies of the spirit. But when that is added, and worketh with the ministry of man (which of it self soundeth onely in the ear) then God speaketh to the heart, *Hos.*

2. 14. Thereby the Father draweth the Elect unto his Son, *Joh. 6. 44, 45.* Then they hear the voice of the Son of God, which they that hear, shall live, *Joh. 5. 25.* The soul, being thus quickned, answers the call of God with the obedience of faith, as *David* found, in *Psal. 27. 8.* *Then saidst, seek ye my face; my heart answered, thy face Jehovah, I do seek.* This answer is the voyce of the whole soul unto God. The understanding, being illightned and fully convinced, closeth with God, in Christ, as the first Truth, and the will chooseth him as the chiefest good; the affections rest satisfied with him alone, and the whole soul placeth all its happinesse in its enjoyment of him, and conformity to him. Hope waits for him, desire longeth after him, and joy delighteth in him above all things. The Lord calleth the whole soul to come unto him, that it may find true rest, in voluntarily subjecting it self under his yoke. *Mat. 11. 28, 29.* and the whole soul, in all its faculties and affections, answereth, as the Church did, in *Jer.*

3. 22. *Lo, we come unto thee; for thou art the Lord our God: With renouncing all other refuges, as they did, in ver. 23. according to that promise, in Hof. 2. 23. I will say, thou art my people, and they shall say, thou art my God.*

R. 2. Because the souls saying, the Lord is my portion, argues unfeigned love of God, in Christ. For all the affections depend on love. What a man loveth, as his portion, he desireth to possesse and injoy; and any impediment thereof stirs up his anger proportionately to this esteem and love of it. As we see with what eagernesse and earnestnesse men endeavour to remove any thing that hinders their credits, or estates, &c. Now, if any love God above the world, above themselves, they will be more jealous of Gods honour than their own, and against that which tends to Gods dishonour, more than against what crosseth their own worldly honour. Hence will arise hatred against sin, because God hates it, both in our selves, *Psal. 97. 10.* and in others

thers, *Rev.* 2. 6. Anger is against particulars, but hatred is general. Anger seeks revenge with moderation, in proportion to the wrong done us, but hatred seeks the destruction of it's object. Anger is placable, but hatred is implacable. And according to the degree of mens love to any thing will be their fear of being deprived of it, and separated from it, and of a'l causes and signes of alienation from it.

R. 3. Because the souls saying, The Lord is my portion, importeth the highest actings of the soul upon God. When *Job* said, *the things that my soul refused to touch*, *Job* 6. 7. he shewed the greatest detestation of them; and when he said, *my soul chuseth death rather than life*, *Job* 7. 15, he shewed a most vehement desire. And when the Lord said, *I will plant them in this land assuredly, with my whole heart, and with my whole soul.* *Jer.* 32. 41. he shewed the firmnesse of his purpose. So. when the soul saith, The Lord is my portion, it argues the most full and firm cleaving

ving of a believer unto God, with purpose of heart, as *Barnabas* exhorted them to do, in *Acts* 11. 23. Else men do not return to him, nor cleave to him, as to the most High, *Hos.* 7. 16. unlesse they turn to him with all their heart, *Joel* 2. 12. and love him with all their heart, *Deut.* 30. 6. For, it is by such a love that faith works, which is a believing with all the heart, *Acts* 8. 37. and produceth obedience from the heart, *Rom.* 6. 17. which is done when all the faculties and affections of the soul do open themselves, and stand open, to give entertainment unto God, in Christ, as the King of glory, *Psal.* 24. 7. When the Keyes of the whole house, and every room in it are delivered up for the use and service of a King, he is entertained like a King. Inferiour guests are content, one with one room, another with another, and sometimes two have but one room, yes, one bed for them both. But the King must have all. So it is in this case, when the God of glory appeared unto *Abraham*, and called him,

*Abra-*

*Abraham* obeyed him, without reservation, *Acts* 7. 2, 3. So must we, yea, so will all, whose souls say, the Lord is their portion.

*Use.* 1. For instruction, in four particulars. 1. Hence learn how a man may know when afflictions are sanctified and blessed unto him, i. e. when the eye of the soul is by them, turned. 1. Upward, to look unto God for an interest in him, as their portion. 2. Inward, to reflect upon the inward actings of the soul, that they may know their interest in God, as their portion. Indeed afflictions of themselves work the contrary, to estrange us from God, and from our selves, and Satan labours to foment and increase a separation of the soul from God, and a division, and distraction of the soul within it self. Therefore it is by an over-ruling power and sanctifying efficacy of Gods spirit, when they cause us to return unto the Lord, *Hos.* 6. 1. and to our selves, *Luke* 15. 17, 18. It is a sure rule of discerning ones self to be in the state of grace, when he finds that  
every

every condition brings him neerer to God, and every sanctifying gift of grace is quickned to it's proper function, to turn the faculty and affection of the soul, in which it is planted, unto God, *Rom. 8. 28, 29.* God is a pure act, alwayes acting: and every one, the neerer he comes to God, the more gracious frame of spirit he hath, and the more spiritual affections, and suitable actings of them, sweetly issuing from thence,

2. Learn hence a profitable use of spiritual soliloquies, which are a mans speaking within himself, to himself, about spiritual things. *David* prescribes communing with a mans own heart, to further his repentance, *Psal. 4. 4.* and, himself made use of it, to quicken his faith, *Psal. 42. 5.* So the Church in my Text, in times of affliction, being driven out of their creature-comforts, and expectations, they communed, and parlied with their own souls, to cleer unto themselves their interest in God, as their portion, and to excite their faith and hope in him unto exercise.

3. Learn



3. Learn hence, not to rest in outward profession, in words, that the Lord is your portion. Many hypocrites say so, whose hearts cleave to some thing else, as their portion; some to their sinful wills, and wayes. They draw near unto God with their lips, but their hearts are removed far from him. Such were those in *Hos. 8. 23.* *Israel will cry unto me, my God, we know thee, when, Israel hath cast off the thing that is good; even God himself, in whom and from whom is all good, and the good word of God, and the rules thereof; though they thus departed from him, yet, in their distresse, they were ready to claim an interest in him. Others, to their worldly objects. They lay up treasures for themselves on the earth, and there their hearts are, Mat. 6. 19. 21. Their belly is their God, and portion, that mind earthly things, Phil. 3. 19. These steal away their hearts from God, even while they are hearing the Word, Ezek. 33. 31. All, to one idol, or other, like those of whom the prophet speaks, in Isa.*

57. 6. *Among the smooth stones of streams is thy portion; they, they are thy lot.* A woful portion have all such; for at present, *their portion is cursed in the earth, Job. 24. 18.* and, for the future, *God will rain upon them, snares, fire, and brimstone, and an horrible tempest; this shall be the portion of their Cup, Psal. 11. 6.* Again, 2. Rest not in some occasional speeches of some one affection alone. *Balaam* had a transient desire that his latter end might be like theirs, who had the Lord for their portion, *Numb. 23. 10.* This is but the saying of one assertion, for a short time. Nothing is to be accounted as said by the soul, unlesse all the faculties and affections of the soul consent in it, acting suitably, *Psal. 103. 1.*

4. Learn hence, to make out for an interest in God, as your portion. This is to be had onely by and in *Jesus Christ, Joh. 20. 17.* For it pleased the Father, that in Christ, God incarnate, all fulnesse should dwell, *Col. 1. 19.* and, that out of his fulnesse we all should receive, and grace  
for

for grace, *Joh. 1. 16.* So that Christ is the immediate fountain of all spiritual blessings unto the Elect, *Eph. 1. 3.* Gods next end, in this dispensation, is, *that all men should honour the Son, as they honour the Father, Joh. 5. 23.* which they do, when they come to the Father by the son, *Joh. 14. 6.* and therefore come to the Son first, seeking to have an interest in him, and then in the Father, by union and communion with him, through faith in the Son of God, *1 Joh. 1. 3.* Let those who are out of Christ, see their misery, in that state, and the remedy thereof in Christ, and accordingly value him above all things, *Rev. 3. 17, 18. Matth. 13. 45.* Let those that have him, seek more full communion with him. prizing that above all things, *Phil. 3. 8, 9.* and answerably prize the word, as David, who said unto God, *the law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of Gold and Silver, Psal. 119. 72.* See that the word be mixed with faith in your hearts, to receive Christ thereby, as God offereth him unto you

you in his Word, *Job. 1. 12.* Shew it to be so, really, and not in outward profession onely, by setting your affections on things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God, *Col. 3. 1, 2.* and by your driving an heavenly trade, in this world, *Phil. 3. 20.*

*Use. 2.* For comfort to all who can thus say, The Lord is their portion; i.e. to all true believers, who know that Their soul saith the Lord is their portion; be exhorted to rejoyce in your portion, *Rejoyce in the Lord alwayes,* and again, *I say, rejoyce,* *Phil. 4. 4.* Have you plenty of outward things? Rejoyce not in them, but in the Lord, *Jer. 9. 23, 24.* In him alone you have fully enough, There is a vast difference between *Jacobs* portion and *Esaus's*, though the Translation holdeth forth each of them, as saying, I have enough, yet the Original varieth their expressions, *Esau* said, *אני עשיר, I have much* *Gen. 33. 9.* but *Jacob* said *כל צרכי*, *I have all,* ver. 11. *Esau* had much in worldly things, but not enough:  
*Jacob*

Jacob had enough in God, who was his All-sufficient portion. Are you in any want? *Habent omnia, qui habent habentem omnia*, They cannot want any thing, who have him to be their portion, who hath all things. In wants of outward things, say with David, *Psal. 23. 1. The Lord is my shepherd, I shall want nothing*; and with the Church, *Hab. 3. 17, 18. Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, nor fruits be in the vine, and the fields yield no meat, the flocks shall be cut off from the fold, and no herds in the stalls; yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. In spiritual wants, the God of all grace, wisdom, power, and goodnesse, is your God and portion; you have all in him, and shall have all that is good for you from him, Psal. 84. 11. Are you in fear of dangers? Say, as David, in Psal. 27. 1. The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? &c. Psal. 27. 1, 2, 3. Again, God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble; therefore will not we fear, though*

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though the earth be moved &c. *Psal.*  
46. 1, 2, 3, 4. Lastly, are you in as  
great distresse as *David* was, in  
1. *Sam.* 30. 3, 4, 5, 6? Yet even then  
take the course that he took. What  
was that? *David* comforted himself  
in the Lord his God. So do you, re-  
joyce in this your portion. For it is,  
1. All-sufficient. 2. Everlasting,

*Lam.* 3. 24. *Therefore will I*  
*hope in him,*

We have already spoken of two  
parts of the Text; the assertion, *the*  
*Lord is my portion*, and the proof of  
it; *saith my soul*. We now pro-  
ceed to the third, the inference, which  
the Church draws from the premises;  
*therefore will I hope in him*. In which  
words three particulars are to be no-  
ted. 1. The reason, whereupon their  
hope was grounded [*therefore*.] 2. The  
resolution of their will to act accor-  
ding to that reason [*I will*.] 3. The  
act it self resolved upon, together  
with the proper object of it [*hope in*  
*him*.] For the first, the reason, where-  
upon

upon their hope was grounded. This illative particle, *therefore*, notes the result of a discourse in the minds of believers, whereby they compare one thing with another, and gather one thing from another; and thence conclude to act suitably to the truest and best reason. Faith is an understanding grace, and knows what use to make of the souls interest in God. When a man hath God for his portion, and knows it, thence faith inferreth it is my duty, and it is for my good to hope in him: Therefore I will hope in him. Reason of it self, in this corrupt state of fallen man, cannot teach men to hope in God. But when God hath in the word of promise given himself to us to be our portion, and faith hath closed with him, as our portion; and the word telleth us it is our duty, and for our good to hope in him, then faith seeth good reason that we should hope in him. Faith useth reason, though not as the ground, yet as a sanctified instrument, to find out Gods grounds, that it may rely upon him. He believes

best, who best knows, why he believes, and he best hopes in God, who can give the best reasons for his hoping in him. The affections, though they have not reason grafted in them, yet they are thus far reasonable, that, in all that are godly-wise, they are raised up, and laid down, guided, and actuated, by sanctified reason, which is the highest and best reason.

*Doct.* They that hope in God aright, have their hope in him raised, and strengthened by good and strong reasons. Reasons fetched from God, and from the souls knowing its interest in him, as his portion, are good and strong reasons, for our hoping in him; and such are the reasons which the Church, in my Text, gives of their hoping in God. They considered Gods All-sufficiency in himself, and to every one that hath him for his portion, and what interest themselves had in him, through faith in Christ, and thereupon conclude; therefore will I hope in him. So may all believers,

*R.* 1. From the inseparable connection of hope with faith: Faith be-  
lieves



believes in Christ, and in God through Christ, upon Gods authority in his word; and what faith believes, hope expects. The reasons for a believers hoping in God, are as good and strong, as for his believing in him. For, as naturally, beams come from the Sun, and branches from the root; so, by spiritual discourse, one truth issueth from another: and, as the Sun and its beams, the roots and branches, are all of one nature; so the grounds of comfortable truths, and reasons taken from those grounds, are both of the same divine authority in themselves. Though in us, discourse is apt to be so troubled, in times of temptation, that we cannot see how one truth ariseth upon another; yet so far as faith sees God to be our portion, the soul sees good and strong reason for our hoping in him for all good, that may suit all our needs, in the best season.

R. 2. From the convincing light, which the spirit of God bringeth into the soul, when he worketh faith and hope in it. It is the office and work  
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of the spirit, to convince, and, by convincing, to comfort, *Job. 16. 7, 8.* Conviction is a clear and infallible demonstration, and comfort is a demonstration, with application unto us, of better and stronger reasons to raise us up, than those are which tend to cast down our souls. When the spirit convinceth, he bringeth such a full and powerful light into the soul, as silenceth all disputes and cavils, and causeth the soul to yield, as overcome by the evidence and authority of the light and truth brought into it. Light hath a convincing property and force in it. When we see the light of the Sun, we know it is day, and will not believe those that shall deny it, though they were ten thousands, because the conviction hereof is undeniable, it is an unreasonable thing to deny it. So the spirit of God brings an undeniable light into the soul, which discovers the vanity of those windings, and turnings, whereof mens deceitful hearts are so full, that there can be no thorough conviction, and effectual to salvation, without the efficacy of the

the Holy Spirit. A common conviction there may be, by the light of nature, or of a natural conscience, or of some common transient-work of the holy Spirit, but that is but weak: For either it discovers but little, as a little spark shews little light, not enough to lighten the room, by overcoming the darkness, and turning it into light; or the light which it shews, it shews but weakly, like a flash of lightning, or a blaze in straw, that is soon out again. But saving conviction is a greater and stronger light, like the light of the Sun, which is a full and powerful light. This is onely from the sanctifying spirit of God. This light shews the evil of sin, and the good of the contrary, in their spiritual nature, and compass, and draws the will answerably, from the one to the other, by converting grace, *Acts 26. 18.* This light is abiding in the renewed soul. Thus the Church, in my Text, was convinced and comforted, in their great distress, by the spirit and word of God, so as they could hold forth good and strong

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reasons, whereupon their hope was strengthened, and their hearts were comforted in sad hours.

*Use* 1. For Instruction, two-fold :  
 1. Learn hence to examine and trie the reasons, whereby you are moved to act ; whether they be good , or not good. Reason is a beam of Gods light. What comes from God, carrieth the soul to God ; Therefore that which draws the soul from God cannot be a good reason, it is not right reason , but falsely called reason, it is not from faith , but from unbelief, not good, but evil, *Heb.* 3. 12. Hence, no good reason can be given for any sin. Whatever reasons are pretended for it, they are not according to Gods Logick, but the Devils Sophistrie, *1am.* 1. 22. *παρελθοντες εν καρδια*, They deceive themselves with false Syllogismes. You may find in *1am.* 3. 15. three Topicks, from whence all such arguings are fetcht, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, the three great enemies of Gods glory, and of Christs Kingdom in us : yet they will pretend their good intention for Gods

honour, when they seek to themselves worldly profits by disobeying Gods commandement. So did *Saul*, but *Samuel* refuted all his false pleas, 1 *Sam.* 15. 21, 22, 23. See how the Scripture reproves such as encourage themselves to do evil, that good may come thereon, *Rom.* 3. 7, 8. *Job* sharply took up his friends for this, in *Job* 13. 7. *Will you speak wickedly for God, and talk deceitfully for him?* yet thus the Devil deceiveth his active instruments against Christ, *the time commeth* (saith Christ, in *Job.* 16. 2.) *that whosoever killeth you, will think he doth God service.* There are that argue from worldly advantages to encourage men to sin, *Prov.* 1. 13. But Christ shews the pernicious delusion of such reasonings, in *Mat.* 16. 26. others from the pleasure of carnal liberty, but *Peter* shews the falseness of that plea, in 2 *Pet.* 2. 19. others from worldly preferment of wicked men, *Mal.* 3. 15. which the Prophet confuteth in verse 18. Some from Gods patience, which God himself answereth, in *Psal.* 50. 21, 22. Such as these

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are the *dialogismoi*, the reasonings of natural men, *Rom. 1. 21.* which should warn all men to deny their carnal wisdom, which is enmity against God, *Rom. 8. 7. 2.* Learn hence to examine and try the goodness and strength of the reasons, whereupon it is grounded, remembering that rule, in, *1 Pet. 3. 15.* *Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you.* You say, you hope in God, If you have no reason for it; its a foolish unreasonable hope. If you have but slight reasons; its a vain hope. And such is hope of the most: one grounds his hope of salvation upon his creation; saying I am Gods creature, and he hath not made me to damn me: Therefore, I hope he will save me. See the delusion of this plea, 1. Are not the Devils Gods creatures? yet they are damned. 2. Though Gods end in making you, was not to damn you, yet your impenitency in sin, and unbelief will damn you. 3. See the Lords own refutation of this plea, in *Isa. 27. 11.* Another grounds his hope  
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of blessedness upon Gods blessing him, as he calls it, with worldly success, and prosperity. But Christ shews the vanity of this hope in that rich man in Hell, *Luk. 16. 25.* and by telling us that *it is that they shall be destroyed for ever, Psal. 92. 7.* Gods end in prospering such in the world, is like *Hesters* end in feasting *Haman*. Another grounds his hope that he shall have heaven hereafter, because he hath had his Hell, through afflictions, in this life. But such consider not what the Word saith concerning *Sodon* and *Gomorrhah*, *Jude 7.* *Suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.* What misery wicked impenitent sinners suffer here, is but a beginning and pledg to them of Hell hereafter. Another grounds his hope upon his Christian priviledges and performances. But this is plentifully refuted in Scripture, by *Johns* speech to the *Pharisees*, *Mat. 3. 9.* and *Pauls* to the *Romans*, *Rom. 2. 28.* and concerning himself, *Phil. 3. 7.* Others ground their hope upon Gods mercy, though they continue in their sins. This indeed is

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a good reason for hope, in those that confess and forsake their sin, *Prov.* 28. 13. But for those that abuse this mercy to the hardning of themselves in sin by it, see how the Lord thunders against such, in *Dent.* 29. 19, 20. Others ground their hope upon their own self-flattering and self-deceiving thoughts of themselves. Such may see their own folly and madness, by what the Scripture saith, in *Prov.* 28. 26. and *Gal.* 6. 3. Let all such, and the like, renounce their ungrounded hope, which, like *that broken reed of Egypt*, *Isa.* 36. 6. will at once both fail them, and ruin them. Till you have an interest in God and Christ, as your portion, you are *without hope*, *Eph.* 2. 12. Therefore the first work of the Spirit, in the soul, by the Gospel, and one great end of the ministry thereof, is, to make way for true faith and hope, by *casting down those λογισμοις, reasonings, and bringing into Captivity every thought, παν νοημα, every sophistical reasoning; to the obedience of Christ.* *2 Cor.* 10. 5.



*Use* 2. For Exhortation to believers, being under temptations and afflictions, whether outward or inward, to improve the reasons, which faith supplieth, for the quickening and strengthening of their hope in God. For, in such times, faith is put to it to use reasons. Indeed the soul needeth not that help so much, when it is in a clear and quiet state, for upon its close and sweet communion with God in Christ, and from some likeness between the renewed soul and God, it presently, and without previous discourse, runneth to God, as by a supernatural instinct; as, by natural instinct, the child runneth to his natural parents in danger, and distress, with confidence. But, in dark times of great afflictions, and temptations, faith is put to use Arguments, and reasons to quicken and strengthen hope. Accordingly, study the grounds of hope, and improve them for your help. 1. Such as may be supplied from the inward store laid up in the soul, as the Church did in my Text. 2. Such as are, or may be, suggested by others.

Harken,

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Harken, and yield to them, and close with them. For, thus you will shew that you have a frame of spirit suitable to any holy and comfortable truth, that shall be presented and applyed to it. There is a principle in every renewed spirit, that closeth with whatever commeth from Gods spirit, that readily claims acquaintance and kindred with it, as comming from the same blessed spring, the holy Spirit. When *Asaph* found the contrary in himself, that his *soul refused comfort*, and he remembred God and was troubled, *Psal. 77. 23.* he saw, and said, *this is mine infirmity*, ver. 10. He saw that it arose from a sickness, a spiritual disease, and distemper in his soul. While passion and temptation disturb the soul, they hinder the exercise of spiritual reason: As we see in *David*, who said, in his haste, *all men are lyars*, *Psal. 116. 10, 11.* This he saw afterward, when his spiritual reason had recovered it self, which before by his distemper was hindred in its working; then he admired God for his benefits toward him,

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him, notwithstanding his provocation of him to have taken a contrary course with him, ver. 12. Labour therefore, 1. That your mind, which is the seat of principles, be well furnished with divine and spiritual truths. For false principles can never produce true comforts. As only truth sanctifieth, *Joh. 17. 17.* So truth only truly comforteth. There is the same reason of both. For it is the peculiar office of the Holy Spirit, both to sanctifie, and to comfort: And the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth, *Joh. 16. 13.* Therefore he will not work by a falshood, but onely by Truth, either sanctification, or consolation. 2. See that your understanding *dianoia*, the dianoetical, discoursing faculty, which is the seat of conclusions, be used to deduce from spiritual principles, such spiritual conclusions, as they are apt to beget. For, by false reasonings, in times of affliction and temptation. 1. Beleivers hinder their faith and hope, when they reason too much from sense and present feeling; *Isa. 40. 27. and 49. 14. Ezek. 33. 10.* 2. Others

2. Others have false comforts from the Light of a fire kindled by themselves, *Isa.* 50. 11. But, if, renouncing such reasonings, you flie to Christ and his righteousness alone, for your acceptance with God, through faith in his blood, with true repentance; then you may reason with God, *Isa.* 1. 18. though not in your own strength or worth, *Iob.* 14. 15. yet you may reason with him in faithful fervent prayer, in *Gen.* 32. 10, 11, 12. whereby he prevailed and got both a new blessing and a new name, ver. 28. Fervent prayers are strong reasonings with God, in Christs strength, and for his sake. This will be well pleasing to God. For, as, when God calls for our obedience, he adds perswasives to his precepts, and reasoneth with us as well as commandeth us; so he alloweth us, in prayer, to add perswasions to our petitions, and to reason with him as well as intreat him. Only, it must be our care that we reason from right Topicks, and heads of Arguments: Such as these, 1. From the infiniteness and freeness of Gods mercy  
and

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and grace. 2. From the immutable firmness of his Covenant and promises in Christ. 3. From our indigence and dependance upon him. 4. From the concernments of his glory, and our necessary good. In such reasonings of faith and hope, the spirit, strength, and life of prayer consisteth. Such pleadings, in the name of Christ, God approveth and requireth, *Isa.* 43. 26. 3. See that the heart, which is the seat of practical knowledge, be fitted to order the conversation and practice, by sound principles, in the mind, and right conclusions, in the understanding; that mental discourse may not vanish in meer empty speculation. As in my Text, *The Lord is my portion*, is the principle laid up in their mind; *saith my soul*, is the proof of it; the conclusion to be from thence inferred, is, Therefore it is my duty to hope in him. This knowledge becomes practical, when the heart so receiveth it, that the will comes to a resolution; *therefore I will hope in him.* Which is the next particular to be spoken to.

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Lam. 3. 24. *Therefore I will hope in him.*

The reason alledged by the Church, is not so much an Argument to convince the judgment (though it contains that also, as we have before proved) as a motive to induce and incline the will to hope in God. For trusting and hoping in God, being a relying and waiting upon God for future good, do especially carry the will to him. As the understanding is led with truth, so the will is led with the goodness of things. As the judgment must be convinced of Gods ability, so the heart must be sweetned with his love and readiness to do us good, for the future, that we may hope in him. For meer knowledge and discourse cannot draw the heart to trust and hope in God, except it hath a relish of his goodness. Therefore *David saith, O taste and see that the Lord is good, Psal. 34. 8.* Those reasons are most prevailing to incline the will towards God, which are drawn from  
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the goodness of God, whereby the heart is opened and enlarged to expect all good, and nothing but good from him who is goodness it self, and our God and portion, in Jesus Christ. This relish is wrought in the renewed soul, by the spirit of faith, together with a light to discern our interest in God.

*Dof.* The reasons whereby believers are quickned and strengthened to hope in God, do strongly incline their will to resolve to hope in him. This is obvious frequently in Scripture, that when the will is inclined to any spiritual good, it is upon spiritual reasons, the Spirit of God joyning his efficacy therewith, and leaving a powerful relish of that good in the soul. This you may see in *Psal.* 40. 8. *Cant.* 1. 3, 4. *Jer.* 3. 22. and in sundry Texts.

*R.* 1. From the different manner of the souls guiding the will, and the bodily members. The soul swayeth the will and affections, as Counsellors doe a well ordered state, by propounding reasons to them. But the  
soul

soul governeth the bodily members, as a Master doth his slaves, by meer command. The will moves the hands and feet, &c. by command, without giving them Reasons. But the will and affections move not without reason, or at least a shew of reason. God made man an understanding creature, indued with rational faculties, the understanding to be the leading faculty, and the will to be the appetite of the soul, according to reason. Therefore it moves toward such a good as is presented to it by the illightned mind or understanding, as the most adæquate and unquestionable object of it. For the freedom and willing consent of the heart is not without rules to order it; but it is therefore said to be free, because, whether, out of a true judgment, it moves one way, or, out of a false, another way; yet, in both, it moves, in a manner suitable to its own condition. For this reason it is that God condescends so far to us, in his word, as to give us so many reasons to hope in him; that our wills might be drawn there-



thereunto, by suitable reasons.

R 2. From the manner of the spirits putting forth his efficacy to incline the wills of believers to hope in God. The heart of man, naturally, is not apt, but averse, hereunto, even when the understanding sees good reasons for it. Therefore the will must necessarily be renewed and changed. This change consists in altering the bent, and inclination of the will; which the Spirit of God doth, by bringing into the soul a new light, and powerful influence. 1. A new light, whereby we are enabled to see other things, or the same truths in a more spiritual and effectual manner, those impediments being removed, which might hinder the evidence of spiritual truths, and the judgment being fully convinced, that we might know things not only notionally, but practically, *as we ought to know them*, 1 Cor. 8. 2. This is that illumination and revelation, whereof the Scripture speaks, in Eph. 1. 18, 19. 1 Cor. 2. 12. 1 Job. 5. 20. 2. A powerful influence: Jesus Christ, both opened the

the understandings of his Disciples ,  
*Luk.* 24. 45. And caused their hearts  
to burn within them, when he spake  
unto them, ver. 32. By this power-  
ful influence the spirit makes every fa-  
culty and affection of the renewed  
soul, to work unto supernatural ends,  
and objects , according to its proper  
manner. As the soul, in the bodily  
eye, causeth it to see, and, in the ear,  
causeth it to hear,, and, in the tongue,  
causeth it to speak, &c. So the spirit,  
in the mind, causeth it to understand  
aright, and, in every affection, cau-  
seth it freely to choose and cleave un-  
to Christ, and to God, in him, and,  
in every affection, causeth it to move  
towards Christ and God, in such a  
manner and way of working , as is  
suitable to its nature. This the Holy  
Spirit doth , by creating and implan-  
ting in-dwelling lively spiritual gifts of  
grace in the soul , which he thereby  
sanctifieth and listeth up unto God  
in Christ; the faculties and affections,  
which were by nature set upon the  
world and sin, and self , being now ,  
by grace set upon things above, and so  
are

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are said to be quickned and made alive unto God. Hence every spiritual gift of grace, whereby any faculty and affection of the soul is sanctified, is called the spirit of that faculty and affection. The sanctified disposition of the mind is called, *the spirit of a sound mind*, 2 Tim. 1. 7. The gift of faith is called, *the spirit of faith*, 2 Cor. 4. 13. So the gift of love, and of the fear of the Lord, is called, *the spirit of love*, 2 Tim. 1. 7: and *the spirit of the fear of the Lord*, Isa. 11. 2. Because the Holy Spirit, dwelling in the soul, infuseth those gifts into it, and so reneweth the faculties and affections of it, Psal. 51. 10. And, 2. Quickneth and exciteth these spiritual gifts, and by them the faculties and affections unto spiritual acts. Without this quickening influence, those spiritual gifts would be, in the soul, unacted, as the bodily senses are, in sleep, or as a ship in a calme at Sea, *Acti agimus*. We act, but instrumentally, subordinately under the spirit, who is the principal efficient and agent, in all

all spiritual good. We act, but not in our strength, nor in the strength of grace received, but from the quickening, strengthening influence of the Spirit. As trees, though they have in them a seminal vertue, yet, except they be helped by influence from heaven, cannot bring forth their fruits; so it is with these spiritual trees of righteousness, as believers are called, in *Isa. 61. 3. It is God that worketh in us, both to will, and to do, of his good pleasure, Phil. 2. 13.*

*Use.* For instruction, threefold :

1. Hence we may learn the true Reason, why the sudden resolutions of many to reform this and that, and to do this and that particular, are so weak and mutable, *as the morning cloud, and as the early dew, Hos. 6. 4.* which soon vanish. Some, at an heart-searching and Soul-piercing Sermon, are affected as that young man, till they are put upon such conditions, as their prædominant lust will not accept, *Mat. 19. 16, 22.* Others, in some strong convictions and awakenings of conscience, are affected,

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as *Saul* was for his unrighteous dealing with *David*, and do purpose against it, as he did, yet afterward with him return to their former sin again, 1 *Sam.* 24. 16, 17. with 26. 2. Some, in great sicknesses, others, in great dangers by Land, or Sea, resolve that they will become new men, if God will be pleased to spare them, or deliver them, this time; of whom the Lord may complain, as he did of the children of *Israel* in *Judg.* 10. 11, 12, 13. The reason is, because they are unregenerate, they are in their natural state. Such may have a notional light in their minds, and awakenings of their natural consciences, and stirrings in their affections, and sudden purposes toward God, and Christ, and spiritual things, from a transient work of the spirit, exciting their innate principle of self-love thereunto, for a time; during which, they are in a better mood, but not in a better state: as in sicknesses, the fits may be altered, yet the sickness remains in its strength. New resolutions, in an un-renewed heart, are like seed in an un-

unsuitable soil, which prospers not, but withers and dies, and comes to nothing at last. How many such are now in Hell; where their remembrance of such fruitless ineffectual purposes gnaweth their consciences, as a never-dying worm, and torments them for ever.

2. Hence we may learn, whence it is that true believers have such firm resolutions of cleaving to God, in Christ, and of hoping in him, when he hideth his face from them, in great afflictions, *Isa. 8. 17. Jon. 2. 4.* The reason of it is, because their hearts are purified by faith, *Acts 15. 9.* which is seated principally in the will, whereby it receiveth Christ, *Joh. 1. 12. Rom. 5. 17. 1 Tim. 15.* and is the effect of the operation of God, *Col. 2. 12.* by his exceeding greatness of power, *Eph. 1. 19, 20.* whose peculiar glory it is, to perswade the heart, *Gen. 9. 27.* and to draw the will, to come unto Christ, *Joh. 6. 44.* which he doth, by changing the disposition, inclination, and bent of it. If you offer green boughs unto  
Swine;

Swine; they regard them not, but trample them under their feet; but if their nature were changed into the nature of sheep, then they would be drawn to them. This is done by the spirit of God, 2 Cor. 3. 17. Before regeneration, the will is in bondage unto sin, but, being united unto Christ, in regeneration, *the Son makes us free indeed*, Job. 8. 36. Then the will freely moveth towards God in Christ, by faith and hope; as a man, though he cannot give life to himself being dead, yet, when he is made alive, he can move himself, from a principle of life in him. So much faith as a man hath, so much free-will he hath to hope in God, in the worst times. So far as his spiritual grace and strength goes, so far he is able, by the concurrence of Gods spirit, which he usually joyns with the ability he hath given to his people, that it may be quickened and actuated thereby. A man cannot act his natural abilities, he cannot move his hand or foot, unless he be assisted with Gods general

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concourse : So a man can do nothing in spiritual actions , without special concurrence of grace in Christ, *Joh. 15. 5.* But being assisted with a supply of the Spirit, proportioned to the exigencies of services to be performed , and of temptations to be resisted, and of corruptions to be mortified , he may say , as *Paul* did, *Phil. 4. 13.* *I can do all things, through Christ, which strengtheneth me.*

3. Hence we may learn, in what manner believers in Christ resolve to hope in God. This resolution in them may be known and distinguished from the resolutions of others , by four characters or properties.

1. It is a sanctified resolution. It is the effect of Gods Holy Spirit dwelling in them, and removing far from them vanity and lying, *Prov. 30. 8.* that is, vain and false apprehensions of things, and turning their whole soul unto God in Christ, to seek all their good in him. This is the effect of converting grace , as the Prophet shews , in *Isa. 17. 7, 8.* *At that day shall a man look to his Maker , &c.*

2. It



2. It is an obedient resolution, in answer to Gods calling them to himself in Christ, *Psal.* 27. 8. it is the yielding up of their wills to be ruled by Gods will, *Psal.* 110. 3. When mens wills are not subdued and conformed unto Gods will, they are in times of affliction like fullen birds in a Cage, which beat themselves to death; like peevish froward children, which will be pleased with nothing, if their wills be crossed in any thing. But when the will is subdued unto Gods will, by the spirit, through the ministry of the Gospel, *2 Cor.* 10. 5. then we can say with *Asaph*, *It's good for me to draw near to God*, *Psal.* 73. ult. And, with *David*, *2 Sam.* 15. 26. *Let the Lord do with me what seemeth good in his own eyes.*

3. It is a rational resolution, led by the best reasons. For faith believes in Christ, and in God through Christ, upon Gods Authority and faithfulness and truth, in his Word and Covenant. Hence it ministreth reasons to quicken and strengthen hope, from Gods All-sufficiency and love in Christ, and faithfulness in his pro-

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mises to expect and wait upon God for all good from him, suitable to our needs, in the best season; and to resolve, as *Job* did, who said, *though he kill me, yet will I trust in him, Job 13. 15.* and (if they see cause to complain) to complain; not of God, but to God, nor of their crosses, but of the crossnesse of their wills to Gods holy will; as *Ephraim* did, in *Jer. 31. 18.*

It is a dependent resolution, relying upon God in Christ, for ability to hope in him, *Isa. 26. 12.* and therefore praying to him, as *David* did, in *Psal. 138. ult.* and to keep it ever in the purpose of their hearts, *1 Chron. 29. 18.* with true self-denial of any sufficiency of themselves, so much, as to think any thing, *2 Cor. 3. 5.* Thus they become strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, *Eph. 6. 10.*

*Lam. 3. 24. Hope in him.*

The last thing to be spoken to, is, the duty resolved upon, illustrated by its object, which is, to exercise *divine hope;*

hope; for so I call that hope, which hath God for its object and efficient, who is therefore called *the God of hope*, *Rom. 15. 13.* and for its ground, the Word of God, as this hope hath, *Psal. 119. 49.* The word in the Original, *נִסְּ* translated *hope*, signifieth, *to expect*; which is the formal act of hope. Hence we may gather a definition of this divine hope. It is a lively, spiritual in-dwelling gift of grace, whereby believers are inclined to expect, in and from God, whatever good they want, and he hath promised. 1. For the general nature of it, which it hath in common with other fruits of the spirit, it is, 1. A lively gift of grace, an holy quality, or habit, or disposition, freely given of God; hereby it is distinguished from that hope, which is meerly a natural affection. For, the natural affection of hope is, by corrupt nature, set upon a mans self, and earthly things, and cannot favour the things of God; and therefore is said to be dead. It's an hope that hath *given up the Ghost*, *Job 11. 20.* Natural men are big

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with hopes, as they that are *with child*, and are in *pain*, to bring their hopes to the birth; but instead thereof, they *bring forth wind*. After long looking and hard labour, all is but a gripe of wind, like a fit of the cholick, as the Prophet intimates, in *Isa.* 26. 18. But by this gift of grace, which I call divine hope, that affection is sanctified, and lifted up unto God, and set upon him and heavenly things, and so quickened and made alive unto God. Whence believers are said to be *begotten again to a lively hope*, *1 Pet.* 1. 3. This gift of grace I describe further by two properties: 1. *Spiritual*, it is a spiritual gift, for two reasons: 1. Because it is created and perfected in believers *by the power of the Holy Spirit*, *Rom.* 15. 13. 2. Because it makes them *spiritual* in whom it is wrought, *1 Cor.* 2. 15. and fit instruments for Gods spiritual service, *1 Pet.* 2. 5. 2. *In-dwelling*; I call it an in-dwelling gift: 1. Because it abides in all that are in Christ. Union with Christ doth not extinguish it in believers. There-

Therefore, when believers are said to be *dead*, in *Col. 3. 3.* it is not meant, in respect of sanctifying gifts of grace, inhærent in them, as if they were dead, and the faculties and affections of their souls were immediately acted by the Holy Spirit; but in respect of sin, they are *dead unto sin, but alive unto God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, Rom. 6. 11.* 2. Because it is not a transient work upon us, nor abiding in the Holy Ghost, though he abideth in us, (for no created gifts or qualities abide in him: for whatsoever is in him is himself) but it is wrought, preserved, increased, actuated, and perfected in us by the Holy Ghost, as all other sanctifying inhærent gifts of grace are. So much for the general nature of this divine hope. 2. The subjects recipient of it are believers. For this hope is grounded on faith in the promises, *Gal. 5. 5.* Therefore, in the Old Testament, trusting in God, and hoping in God, are promiscuously used in one and the same sense, and in *1 Pet. 3. 15.* hope is put for faith. For they both act to-

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together inseparably, in supporting the soul, in times of affliction; yet, in their manner of acting, there are some differences between them. For,

1. The adæquate object of faith is the whole Word of God, holding forth good and evil, promises and threatnings, blessings and cursings. But the object of hope is good onely.
2. Faith, in its relying upon the promises, looks to the word promising, and to the Authority of God, the promiser; but hope to the good promised, and to the goodness of the promiser.
3. Faith looks to all times, past, present, and to come, and makes future things present, *Psal.* 60. 7. But hope looks onely at good things, and at those onely as future.
4. Faith looks at God, as the first truth; hope relies on God, as the chief good.
3. The formal act of hope is expectation. Therefore it is said to *look for him*, in a way of waiting for him, *Isa.* 8. 17. The Greek word *ἐκδοξία* is well translated, *earnest expectation*, in *Rom.* 8. 19. *Phil.* 1. 20. it being a metaphor taken from the bodily

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dily gestures of those who look for some person or thing, with earnest desire, and assurance, lifting up and putting forth their head, stretching out their neck, fixing their eyes with intention and observation, to shew the strength, firmness, and certainty of this hope. For the object of this divine hope is principally God himself, 1 Pet. 1. 21. and secondarily, all those means and degrees, whereby believers come unto God, ver. 12. unto whom this hope looketh, with waiting upon him for all the good they want, and he hath promised: So that this hope is certain and infallible, being objectated upon God, founded in faith, and grounded upon the promises of God, *who cannot lie*, Tit. 1, 2. Hence it supporteth the heart, in the worst times.

*Doct.* Hoping in God aright is a special means of supporting the soul against discouragement, in times of great afflictions. The Scriptures are innumerable which confirm and prove this truth: And it must be so for these Reasons.

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R. 1. From the formal object of divine hope, which is God himself, in whom alone is to be found all ability and readiness to do good unto those that hope in him, and wait upon him, in such times. 1. All ability to help is in God alone. Princes are of greatest abilities among men, yet we are forbidden to *trust in Princes, in whom there is no help*, *Psal. 146. 3.* Men commonly think themselves happy in the favour and protection of Princes: But they are deceived. Therefore it is added in ver. 5. *Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God.* For no creature hath ability of it self, and whatever ability God hath put into any, yet the exercise and success of it depends on God alone. *Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: Except the Lord keep the City, the Watchman waketh but in vain. It is in vain to rise up early, to go to bed late, to eat the bread of sorrows. So he will give his beloved quiet sleep, Psal. 127. 1, 2.*  
that



that is, in their resting upon him, building, keeping, giving them bread without sorrows. Therefore, when

- men say, They hope for this or that, from such a creature; either they mean,  
• They hope to receive it from God, by such a creature, or it notes, not a divine, but a meer humane hope; or it is not a Christian, but a vain hope.

2. As God onely is able, so he is always ready to do good to all those that hope in him. For he is infinite, as well in goodness, as in power.

*Thou art good and doest good, Psal. 119. 68.* This *David* largely shews by sundry instances, in two cases.

1. In deliverances, whereof he notes four examples, in *Psal. 107. 1.* Of men wandering in the Wilderness, ver. 2. to 10. 2. Of Prisoners, ver. 10. to 17. 3. Of persons dangerously sick, ver. 17. to 23. 4. Of men in great danger by Storms at Sea, ver. 23. to 33. In all which, he saith, God helps men crying to him, when all help and hope in the creature fails them. 2. In various changes of mens outward conditions; in reference,  
both

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Both to the increase of the fruits of the earth, or to the diminishing of them, whereby men become rich, or poor, ver. 33. to 36. and to mens preferment, or abasement, ver. 40, 41. The summe of all is, that, which the Psalmist saith elsewhere, in *Psal. 46.*

*1. God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.*

*Ob.* Seeing hope is of things future, and God is a present help; how can it be said, that God is the object of our hope?

*Ans.* 1. God is, not onely a present help; but also a future help, even for ever. And so he is the object both of our faith and hope, *1. Pet. 1. 21.* And, for the future, hope relies upon God, though the soul doth enjoy him, at present, as our God. 1. That he will continue his goodness to us. *This God is our God, and he will be our guide unto death, Psal. 48. ult.* 2. That we shall have a more cleer and full sight of him, *Psal. 42. 11.* 3. That he will supply all our need, *Phil. 4. 19.* and that he will multiply grace and peace unto us,

*1. Pet.*

1 Pet. 1. 1. and that, as he is *the* God of all grace, he will, after we have suffered a while, make us perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle us, 1 Pet. 5. 10. These future good things hope expects, and 4. at last eternal salvation. Therefore it is called, *the hope of Salvation*, 1 Thess. 5. 8. *the hope of glory*, Rom. 5. 2. and *the hope of eternal life*, Tit. 3. 7. all which are good things to come, and though difficult, yet possible to be had, by his help, and are most certain, by vertue of his promise, in Christ, which is the ground of this hope. Hence hope is called an anchor sure and steadfast, Heb. 6. 19.

R. 2. From Gods manner of bringing the soul and this object, himself, together, by this hope. For, 1. By effectual convincing and humbling the soul, he prepares it for this hope. He gives them the valley of Achor for a door of hope, Hos. 2. 15. 2. He doth it, by revealing his grace to a soul so prepared. To this end, 1. He openeth the eyes of their understanding, Eph. 1. 18. 2. Having given them a spi-

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spiritual eye-sight : he lays his grace and goodness in Christ before them, by the ministry of the Gospel, *Eph.* 3. 9. 3. He particularly applyeth the same to them as theirs, by the ministry of the Word, *Acts* 13. 26. and by the efficacy of the spirit, *Psal.* 35. 3. So that now they can look upon God, in the Covenant of grace, as their God, *2 Cor.* 6. 18. and upon all the good of the Covenant, as a legacy given unto them by Christ, in his last Will and Testament, *2 Pet.* 1. 3. Hence what they yet have not, in sense they see ground to hope for, *Psal.* 130. ult. And this hope supports the heart under great affliction, upon three main props: 1. The power of Gods grace: 1. To pardon many and great sins, *Rom.* 5. 20. 2. To perform all his promises, how difficult so ever it may seem to our sense and reason, *Rom.* 4. 18. to 22. 3. To comfort in all tribulations, *2 Cor.* 1. 3, 4. To help in all distresses, *2 Cor.* 1. 9, 10. 2. Upon the freeness of Gods grace and promise, notwithstanding all our unworthiness,

*in all Storms and Tempests.* 87  
ness, *Isa.* 43. 25. *Mich.* 7. 18.  
3. Upon the reality of Gods good  
purposes towards us, declared by sen-  
ding his Son, and his Sons comming  
to bring us to God, *Luke* 19. 10.  
*1 Pet.* 3. 18. and Christs calling us  
unto himself, *Mat.* 11. 28, 29. and  
the fathers drawing us unto his Son,  
*Joh.* 6. 44, 45. The relish which be-  
lievers have of the sweetness of Gods  
grace in Christ, turneth the eye of  
their soul towards him, in desires and  
expectations of further good from him  
*Psal.* 34. 8.

R. 3. From the effects of this hope,  
all which shew that the soul is sup-  
ported by it. 1. It brings comfort to  
the soul; Therefore *rejoycing* is joyn-  
ed with this *hope*, *Rom.* 12. 12. There  
is joy in hope of good to come,  
though it be yet absent. Because the  
soul hath a taste of it, in the be-  
ginnings, and first fruits. Now joy  
strengthens the heart answerably to  
the degree of it. *The joy of God is  
your strength*, *Neh.* 8. 10. As when  
a man seeth the clouds begin to clear,  
in a time of rain, he is comforted, in  
hope

hope that it will be fair weather ; so when the soul, under great affliction, seeth some glimps of the light of Gods countenance, this hope and joy reviveth, and is increased, as that is more cleared unto him, *1 Pet. 1. 3, 6. 2.* It quieteth and setleth the heart in peace proportionably to the measure of our trusting and hoping in God ; *Moses* found it so, at the Red Sea. *Exod. 14. 13.* and *David*, at *Ziglag*, *1 Sam. 30. 6. 3.* It makes the heart patient in waiting on God, with submission to his good pleasure, *Psal. 37. 7.* and *34. 34.* How is God *their strength in the time of trouble?* By strengthening their hope to wait patiently and quietly upon him, not using any indirect and unlawful means to escape or come out of trouble. The Lord cryed, concerning this : *Their strength is to sit still, Isa. 30. 7. 4.* It causeth the soul to cleave unto God, whatever befalls them in the way of obedience, *Rom. 5. 23. Heb. 3. 6.*

*Use.* For a reproof of two sorts :  
 1. All unregenerate persons may be  
 reproved hence

hence convinced that their state is wretched and miserable, upon two grounds: 1. Because they have no hope in God, *Eph. 2. 12.* A Christlesse state is an hopelesse state, and an hopeles state is the worst condition. They pretend to this hope, but without ground, and an ungrounded hope is a self-deluding hope. The object of their hope shall fail them, *Mat. 7. 22, 23.* and the hope which they seem to have, *shall perish*, and *be cut off*, *Job 8. 13, 14.* It shall be *as a spiders web*, finely spun, but not firm, its but an hope of their own making, as the spiders web is wrought out of its own bowels; and, as the spider thinks it self, when it is lodged in its web, so they think themselves safe in their false hope; but as the spiders web is easily and suddenly swept away, so shall their hope be by Gods beesome, *Isa. 14. 23.* 2. Because they abound in vain hopes; in themselves, *Luke 18, 19.* in men, *Isa. 2. 22.* in riches, *1 Tim. 6. 17.* in chariots and horses, *Psal. 20. 7.* in their mental and bodily abilities, *Prov. 3. 4.*  
*Jer.*

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*Jer.* 9. 23, 24. Such hopes argue ignorance, pride, atheism, idolatry, setting up the creature above God, *Jer.* 2. 12, 13. The effects also are pernicious. 1. Loss, *Jon.* 2. 8. *Phil.* 3. 7. 2. Disappointment, *Jer.* 8. 15. 3. To be ashamed of their hope, *Joh.* 6. 20. *Isa.* 1. 29. and 20. 5. and 30. 5. 4. Great hurt, *Hos.* 12. 1. *Ephraim feedeth on wind, and followeth the East-wind.* The East-wind, in those eastern countries, was an hot scorching wind, that blasted things, and made them wither, *Gen.* 41. 6. *Ezek.* 17. 10. As *Pharaoh* was to the people of *Israel*, so are all false objects of hope, *the staff of a broken reed, whereon if a man leane, it will go into his hand and pierce in*, *Isa.* 36. 6. Many have found it so, on their death beds, and in Hell for ever. 2. Hence believers are to be reprov'd, who do not exercise this hope, but give way to discouragement, in times of affliction. For, 1. Hereby they make themselves unfit to perform duties towards God and men, in a right manner. Towards God, in prayer, and receiving



ving the word and the outward seals of the Covenant, and in thanksgiving and praising God. Towards men, in an amiableness towards all, and in merciful helpfulness towards the afflicted. 2. They dishonour Religion, by strengthening ignorant and profane persons, in a false conceit, that Religion is but a melancholick humour. 3. They weaken themselves and others. Themselves; For, from fainting, comes discouragement, and thence, halting, and from thence an aptness to be turned out of the good way. For take away hope, and you take away all endeavour. Others also, if they be weak, will be offended; and, if they be prejudiced, will be apt to insult and to twitch such, as *Eliphaz* did *Job*, in *Job* 4. 3. to 7. 4. They give Satan great advantages against themselves, who diligently observeth such times, when Christians are under deep despondency of spirit, when they have laid aside their helmet, to wound and weaken them more, he will then ply them with suggestions, to make them believe

lieve any thing against God, and against the Scripture, and against themselves; and to conclude desperate things, to their own hurt.

*Object.* This is my case; therefore I never had a right hope in God.

*Ans.* Thus one discouragement follows upon another, as circles in the water, whereinto a stone is cast, which should humble you for neglect of stirring up your hope unto exercise. But yet, let it not discourage you. For true hope is sometimes in a believer, as in those trees, spoken of in *Isa. 6. 13.* *Whose substance is in them when they cast their leaves.* It is onely winter with you, then life is hid in the root, though no sign of it appears outwardly; that you may learn not to trust in grace received, but in Christ; depending on him to quicken and actuate his own gifts of grace in you, waiting with fervent desires and prayers for the Sun of righteousness to arise upon you, with healing in his wings. In the meantime, remember that Christ himself hath pronounced them blessed, who are

poor

poor in spirit, and mourn, are meek, and hunger and thirst after righteousness, and that he hath promised unto such, that heaven is theirs, they shall be comforted, shall inherit the earth, and shall be satisfied. Let such encouragements quicken your hope, and quiet your hearts, that it shall be with you, according to his Word, and that your hope so grounded, shall not make you ashamed.

*Use* 2. For instruction, in three particulars: 1. How to bring and keep the object and this act, God and this hope together. 2. How to try, whether you hope in God aright, or not. 3. How to exercise this hope, in sundry cases, in which you may be called to the practice of it. This instruction is necessary, at all times, and especially, in these times, wherein we may have more necessitous use of this hope, than many do imagine. Therefore I shall the more studiously insist in clearing these particulars, speaking to the first, at this time, with the help of Christ.

1. How to bring and keep the object

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ject and act, God and this hope together. The holy Pen-man of the Epistle to the *Hebrewes*, in *Heb.* 3. 6. compares the Church of God to an house; saying, *whose house we are, if we hold fast the confidence, and rejoycing of hope firm to the end.* As it is in the building of an house, so it must be in the building of this hope. In the building of an house, that it may be strong, and kept strong, three things are necessary: 1. That a strong foundation be well laid. 2. That the house be strongly built upon it. 3. That it be kept in due repair. So it must be, in this great business, whereof we now speak. 1. A strong foundation of hope must be well laid. 2. Our hope must be strongly built upon it. 3. We must be careful that our hope be continually kept in due repair. Of these three we shall speak distinctly, and shall endeavour to shew how they are to be done. 1. For the first, God himself, as he makes himself and his will known unto us, by his written Word, is the onely suitable object, and strong foundation,  
or

or ground-work of this hope. Therefore the Church, in my Text saith, *I will hope in him.* For in him alone are the properties of that object, on which true hope must rely. A man can be in no condition, wherein he needs help, but there is in God power and will to supply it unto him. If comfort be wanting, he is *the God of all comfort*, 2 Cor. 1. 3. He can and will create comforts, for his people, out of nothing; yea, out of the contrary: As he caused at first, *light to shine out of darkness*, 2 Cor. 4. 6. Those troubles, temptations, and persecutions, and afflictions, which threaten destruction, become means of our salvation, by his over-ruling providence, *who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working*, Isa. 28. ult. In this object, two principles are to be looked at. 1. A principle of being. 2. A principle of knowing. 1. The principle of being, is God himself, concerning whom, five particulars must be believed, that our hope may be objectated upon him. 1. That God in whom we hope, is an eter-

eternal, independant Being or Essence, who giveth being, and order of being, and power of working unto all things. 2. That in the Being or Essence of God are three Subsistences or Persons: God, in the first Person, the Father (with the Son and Holy Spirit) decreed the salvation of the Elect, and all things tending thereunto. God, in the second Person, the Son, hath fully and exactly answered that decree, as our surety, in the work of Redemption. God, in the third Person, the Holy Spirit, effectually reveals and applies the love of the Father, and the grace of the Son unto the Elect, in time, and fits them for communion with the Father and the Son, from both whom he proceeds. 3. That Christ, the Mediator, is *Immanuel*, in whom God was reconciling the World unto himself, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19. who united the two natures of God and man, in his Person, and was thereby fit to bring God and man together, having made man amiable to God, and God amiable to man, who were enemies before, by the sin  
of

of man. 4. That God, in Christ, is fatherly towards believers, in all his Attributes, whereby he is described, in *Exod.* 34. 6, 7. and other Texts of Scripture, all which are in God essential; and therefore eternal, and infinite. 5. That God acteth all these his excellencies, by his fatherly providence, governing and ordering all things for the good of his people, so powerfully, that Satan and his instruments, in seeking to cross his revealed will, shall and do fulfill his secret will, to their own confusion. This providence extends as far as the creation, all things, even the most casual, and most disordered things, sins, and the most free actings of men are ordered by it, so that God doth sometimes great things by weak means, disabling more likely means, *Eccles.* 9. 11. Sometimes without means, and sometimes crossing the course of means. And, when evil is intended, God either wholly averts it, or limits and bounds it, in regard of measure, *Psal.* 129. 3, 4. or of continuance, *Psal.* 125. 3. Hereby also he can soth

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and ordereth a cessation of actions, that some shall not favour us, and others shall want wisdom and ability to help us; from Gods withdrawing his concurrence, who hath sufficient reason, as well, not to do what he doth not, as to do what he doth. The right knowledge of God in his Being, is necessary to the well laying the ground-work of this hope, as conducing unto the preparatory purposes and uses. 1. To silence all disputes and murmurings: This made *Aaron* hold his peace, *Levit.* 10. 2, 3. And *David* not to open his mouth, *Psal.* 39. 9. 2. To cause the soul to resign up a mans self to the will of God, who worketh all things according to the counsel of his will, *Ephes.* 1. 11. So it wrought in *Ely*, *1 Sam.* 3. 18, in *David*, *2 Sam.* 15. 26. and in the *Saints*, *Acts* 21. 14. 3. To quicken us to inure our selves to do Gods will, that we may be fit to suffer it. For passive obedience springs from active. Then are mens wills in right order, when, as God is the highest, so his will hath the highest place in our hearts; when they



they are willing to do what God commands, to suffer what God inflicts, and to be at Gods dispose, when this stayeth our hearts, in all events, that they are in covenant with him, who sits at the Stern, and hath committed all power to our Redeemer, who hath our names in his breast-plate, and on his shoulders. The second principle to be looked at in God, that our hope may be well built on him, is a principle of knowing. This principle is the written Word, whereby God makes himself and his will known unto us, without which we have no good ground or warrant to build our hope upon God. But, that his people may thus hope in him with strong encouragement, He gives us his Word, that thereby we may know his good thoughts, and purposes towards us, which is a sufficient ground of hope, it being the Word of him that cannot lie; and not only his bare Word, but a binding Word, his promises, which are free expressions of his love, with engagement of it unto us; nor only Promises, but his Covenant

founded upon a full satisfaction made to his justice, by our Redeemer, as the head of the Covenant ; and thereunto hath added his Oath, *Heb. 6. 18* and Seals, both outward, *Rom. 4. 11.* and inward, *Ephes. 1. 13.* and all this he hath done, that our hope might be built upon a strong foundation, that believers might be supported in all tempests, *Isa. 54 9, 10, 11.*

2. Having such a strong foundation well laid, our next duty is, to build strongly upon it. Which that you may do, attend to these directions. 1. See that you trust and hope in God by light and strength received from himself. 1. By divine light, not by meer humane reasons. For none can so know God, in his truth, and goodness, as to trust and hope in him, but by his own light revealing himself to the soul, by his Word and Spirit ; as none can see the Sun, but by its own light, *Psal. 36 9.* 2. The divine power must accompany this light. For, neither education, nor examples of others, nor our own resolutions, can settle our hearts upon God, till we find

find an inward power and authority causing divine truths to shine into our hearts, and subduing all our reasonings, and thoughts unto the obedience of faith: only that soul, which hath found the efficacy of the Spirit, by the Word, in casting it down, and raising it up, and renewing it, can hope in God aright for things of God; then, and not before, a man chuseth God for his portion, and cleaveth to him, as his chief good; then, and not before, the sweetness of Gods love is let into the soul, and relished by it, which draweth the whole soul to trust and hope in him, *Psalms* 9. 10.

2. Suit the Promises to your several conditions. For whatever condition of life any believer is or can be in, he hath Promises in the Word suitable to it; whether present, or possible. 1. At present, whatever difficulties or impossibilities, as to second causes, and means appear to sense, or reason, faith lifteth up the soul above them all, to look unto the Promises and power of God, and thereby

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quickeneth and strengtheneth our hope in him, *Romans* 4. 19, 20, 21. *Hebrews* 11. 27. 2. Possible, The Saints have found great help to their faith and hope, by putting cases, and answering their own hearts therein from Gods all-sufficiencies. So David, *Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear none evil; for thou art with me, Psal.* 23. 4. Again, *Though an Host should encamp against me, my heart should not fear, Psal.* 27. 3. Again, *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble; therefore we will not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the Mountains be carried into the midst of the Sea, though the Waters thereof roar, Psal.* 46. 1, 2, 3. Paul excellently puts other cases, of an higher nature than these, and triumphs over them all, in the unchangeableness of Gods love to believers in Christ, *Rom.*

8. 38, 39.

13. When your hope is quickened, by the Promises, look unto God with a single eye, trusting and hoping in him alone. To trust upon two props, of which

which one is sound, the other rotten, is the ready way to fall. Make use of all helps, which God gives you, but hope in him alone. For hoping in God is a part of that natural worship of God, enjoined in the first Commandement, which belongs to God alone, *Mat* 4. 20. and thus to have our eyes towards God alone is the proper effect of true conversion, *Isa.* 17. 7, 8.

4. See that the dispositions of your spirits be answerable to the relations you have to God, when he becomes your portion, and the object of your hope. He hath, 1. The relation of a faithful Creator, and the disposition in you that must suit that, is, to commit your souls to him in well-doing, *1 Peter* 4. 19. in the want of means. 2. The relation of a father, and the disposition in you that suits thereunto, is, to cast your care upon him, believing that he careth for you, *1 Peter* 5. 7. *Matthew* 6. 32. 3. The relation of an husband, the disposition that suits that, is foederal faithfulness, *Hosea* 2. 19, 20. *2 Cor.* 11. 2, 3. 4. The relation

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lation of a guide and teacher, the disposition suitable to that is, to yield up your selves in all things to be guided by his counsel, as *Asaph* did, *Psal.* 73. 24. 5. The relations of your Judge, Law-giver, and King, *Isa.* 33. 22. The disposition which answers those relations, is obedience to Gods commands, and walking in his wayes. Else, you do not trust in him, but tempt him, *Mat* 4. 7. You may expect God, In his wayes of mercy, when you keep in your way of obedience. Then you may, with comfort, expect whatever good those relations can yield, from the All-sufficient God, who regarding more our weakness than his own greatness, condescendeth so low as to take upon himself such relations, for the strengthening our hope in him.

5. Often call to mind former experiences, both of your selves and others. *Experience worketh hope*, *Rom.* 5. 4. Of others, *Psal.* 21. 4. and thence infer. as *David* did, *Thou Lord hast not forsaken them that trust in thee*, *Psal* 9. 10. 12. Of your selves, *2 Cor.* 1. 19, 10. *2 Tim* 4. 7. 8. Christians

Christians should be ready to communicate their own experiences to others, as *David* did in *Psal.* 66 16. Thus the Word will be as silver seven times tryed, *Psal.* 12. 6.

6. Rest not in your hoping in God, as it is an act done, or a grace exercised by you. For hoping is but the act of a creature, and the gift of hope it self is but a created gift, and to hope in any creature, is to make that creature an Idol. But to depend upon God to quicken an strengthen your hope in himself alone, who is called, *the hope of Israel*, *Jer.* 14. 6. and by his help, through the promise, to trust and hope in him the Promiser, who gives Promises, and can create performances (so that if you close with the Promise as good, you may close with the Promiser, as better, who both speaks what he means, and will perform what he speaks;) this is the way to build your hope strongly upon God.

3. That you may keep this hope in repair: 1. See that your hoping in God be a continued act, frequently renewed upon every new occasion, not

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only in adversity, but also in prosperity, as well in enjoyments as in wants. For we have use of hoping in God for the continuance of the good we have, and for his blessing to be continued to us in it. 2. Observe what breaches are made in your hope, from day to day; whether from within, by corruptions, or from without by temptations? You will find that the main breaches are either from false principles, or from doubts of true principles, or from inadvertency, and mindlessness of them. Thence the soul is as sheep that are driven from mountain to hill, and have forgotten their resting place, *Jer. 50. 6.* 3. Having found out the impediments of your hoping in God, stir up yourselves as *David* did, saying, return unto thy rest, O my soul, *Psal. 116. 7.* by stirring up this gift of God in you, *2 Tim. 1. 6.* To this end, 1. See that your judgments be right. 2. Beware of those things that are opposite to this hope, and cast them off, *Hebrews 12. 1, 2.* where every thing that bows the soul downward is compared to a weight;



weight; and loose affections, and false reasonings, are compared to a long loose garment, which easily be-sets the feet, and will hinder a runner in a race, if it be not laid aside, or girt up. 3. Speak to your own heart, as you would speak to another, in a like case. 4. Joyn prayer with your use of other means, *Romans 15. 13.* 5. According to Gods order of promising, do you proceed to quicken and strengthen your faith and hope in him. 1. He promiseth that he will be your God, so let your faith look at him, in Christ, and let your hope expect that he will be so to you, for the future, and for ever, *Psal. 48. ult.* 2. He promiseth that he will forgive all sins unto repentant believers: Therefore renew your repentance and faith in the blood of Christ daily, and then hope in him, and pray that he will make you to hear joy and gladness, and restore to you the joy of his salvation, as *David* did, *Psal. 51. 8, 12.* 3. He hath promised that he will sanctifie, and heal his people. Therefore hope in him, and pray to him for it, as *David* did, in *Psal. 138. ult.*

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ult. 4: He hath promised that he will give that inheritance in heaven unto all that are sanctified by faith in Christ. Therefore wait for it in hope, *Rom. 8. 23, 24.* and let that hope comfort and strengthen your hearts in all the sufferings of this life, *2 Cor: 4. 16, 17, 18.* 5. He hath promised that he will give all things needful for this life, till we come thither, *Psal: 84. 11.* Therefore hope in him for daily bread, and for all things you need. For as the same love of God moved him to save his elect for ever, and to provide for them in this World, till they be put into possession of that salvation; so the same hope relyeth upon God, both for heaven hereafter, and for all necessary supplies till we come thither. Thus we have endeavoured to instruct you, in this first point, how to bring the act and object, God and this hope, together, that you may hope in him, which you see is a matter of great importance, and necessary to be understood practically, that we may hope in God aright.

**The second Instruction is; to teach**  
**men**

men how to try whether their hoping in God, which they pretend; is right, or not. The danger is very great, if you be deceived herein, yet many are deceived, through want of light to discern the difference between the natural affection of hope and this spiritual gift of hope in God. This divine hope, whereof we now speak, may be known by 3 Characters.

1. By the ground of it. 2. By the formal act of it. 3. By the proper effect of it

1. By the ground of it. If it be rightly grounded, it is the right hope. The ground of this hope is faith, *Heb. 11.* 1. which hath a double object: 1. God in Christ. 2. The Word of God. That you may try and examine your hope, whether it be thus grounded or not; we shall insist some what more largely in this, and be more brief in the two following Characters, which will be more easily apprehended, after this is cleared.

1. Hope is rightly grounded, when it is grounded or bottomed upon faith, receiving Christ, and applying to our selves, in him, God as our God, and portion, in the Covenant of Grace.

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It is the office and work of faith, to appropriate God in Christ, to a mans self. The voice of Christ unto believers, is *My Father is your Father, and my God your God, John 20. 17.* And the voice of faith, in a believer, to Christ, is, *My Lord and my God, vers. 28, 29.* God absolutely considered, out of Christ, is an object of the greatest terrour unto sinners, *Isa. 33. 14.* But God, relatively considered, in Christ, as our God and portion, is the chiefest object of our hope, and love. Faith cleaveth unto God, as our God and portion. And, when we know that God is our portion, and thereupon hope in him, then our hoping in God is right, because it is rightly grounded. Our having God for our portion, begins at our entring into Covenant with him. For then, and not before, we have a propriety in God, and he in us, *Ezek. 16. 8.* This propriety in God is given and manifested to us, by degrees. 1. The soul is convinced of the vanity and insufficiency of all other things to be our portion, and

*in all Storms and Tempests. III*

so is made willing to forsake them all, that it may enjoy God, as his portion, Till this be done, men observe lying vanities and forsake their own mercy, *John* 2. 8, 9. 2. The soul is convinced that God is the God of some, by a peculiar right, *Psal.* 4. 3. These he accounts the onely happy men in the World, *Psal.* 144. ult. 3. Hence arise fervent desires that God would be so to him, in particular. Remember me, O Lord, with the favour of thy people, *Psal.* 106. 4. 4. The soul is quickened, by the spirit of faith, to turn unto the Lord with true repentance, and to put it self upon Gods mercy in Christ. and to wait upon him for the discovery of his love to him, *Joel* 2. 13, 14. 5. God, having thus far brought the soul towards himself, doth, in his own time, manifest to us that he is our God, whence the soul actually closeth with him, by faith, in Christ, as our portion, *Hos.* 2. 13. *Psal.* 73. 25. 6. Hereupon we come to hope in him, for what ever good we need, and he hath promised, *Psal.* 147. 11. And as faith groweth  
more

more towards full assurance, so hope groweth more strong in spiritual security, and courage, and glorying in God, *Psal.* 48. ult yet, in the darkest times, faith inables the soul, from its former taste of Gods goodness, to claim an interest in him still. *Doubtlesse, thou art our Father, &c. Isa.* 63. 16. with an expectation of future good from him, *Psal.* 42. 11. Yea, when experience and sense failes, by reason of our inadvertency, yet so much vertue of former sense remains, as inables the soul, even when it is in darkness, and seeth no light, to trust in the name of the Lord, and stay it self upon his God, *Isa.* 50. 10. and to wait upon the Lord, even when he hideth his face from us, and to look for him, *Isa.* 8. 17. But, if any desire to know how they may clearly discern that their hope is grounded on faith in God, as their God and portion in Christ; I answer, you may know it by Gods influence in a believing soul, whereby this hope is quickned and strengthened. For, when God becomes any ones portion, he

becomes a fountain of blessings to that person, *God, our own God shall bless us, Psal. 67. 6.* He is a *Sun and a Shield, the Lord will give grace and glory no good thing will be withhold from them, Psal. 84. 11.* Especially, of spiritual blessings, which the Apostles, in their salutations, comprehend in two things, grace, and peace. God as our God, in Christ, is the God of both to his people. He is *the God of all grace, 1 Pet. 5. 10.* and *the God of peace, Heb. 13. 20.* That is, he influenceth believers with all those graces; which breed peace and quietnesse in their souls, supporting them under all burthens of temptations, troubles, wants, imperfections, till they come to enjoy perfect rest in God himself, and fitting them, in the mean time, more and more, for all that good, which they want, in themselves, and he hath prepared for them, in Christ. For, 1. God, as our portion, is the God of love; yea, *love it self, 1 John 4. 8.* and a taste of his love is better then wine, *Cant. 1. 3.* so full of spirit that it will revive a drooping,  
sink-

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sinking, dying soul, and quicken all graces in it, and make any condition comfortable, any affliction tollerable, and strengthen it to wait for more full communion with God, in the use of the most difficult means, as *Jacobs* love to *Rachel*, enabled him to wait for her seven years, in an hard service, and they seemed to him but as a few days, *Gen.* 29. 20. 2. God, as our portion in Christ, is *the God of hope*, *Rom.* 15. 13. whereby, as by an Anchor, he stayeth and fixeth the soul upon himself: as a Ship at Anchor, though it may be moved, and tossed, yet it is not removed from its place and station; so, if you find that your soul cleaveth to God, in Christ, and will not be driven from him, whatever troubles, or temptations befall you, your hope in him is right. This *Asaph* found. in *Psal.* 73. ult. 3. God, as our God and portion, is *the God of patience*, *Rom.* 15. 5. whereby believers resign up themselves to his dispose, humbly submitting their wills to his. If you find it so; your hope is right, *David* found it so; *1 Sam.* 30. 6.

4. God,



4. God, as our portion, is *the Father of Spirits*, *Heb.* 12. 9. which he so governs, and meekens, that, though we be sensible of afflictions, he keeps our spirits from discontentment and murmuring, in a quiet frame. Hereby also you may know that your hope is right. The Church found it so, in *Mich.* 7. 9. 5. God, as our portion, is *God All sufficient*, *Gen.* 17. 1. whence he gives us contentment, in all estates, 1 *Tim.* 6. 6. If you find it so, your hope is right. *Paul* found it so, *Phil.* 4. 11, 12. 6. God, as our portion, is *the God of all comfort*, 2 *Cor.* 1. 3. who, by letting the light of his countenance into the soul, maketh it lightsome. This joy strengthens the soul, *Neb.* 8. 6. against inordinate fears of wants, *Psal.* 23. 1. or of dangers, *ver.* 4. and under sense of afflictions, *Rom.* 5. 2, 3. and oppositions, *Mich.* 7. 7. and temptations, 2 *Cor.* 12. 9, 10. and in all events, *Rom.* 8. 38, 39. Not, that every believer attains to such high actings of faith and hope; yet, if it prevail to cause them to trust in him,  
and

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and stay themselves upon him, in the dark, it is a right hope, *Isa.* 50. 10.

2. Hope is rightly grounded, when it is bottomed upon the Word and Promises of God believed in. In the first conversion, when the soul had nothing, but the bare promise of free mercy in Christ, to look at, God did thereby cause us to trust and hope in him, *Psal.* 119. 49. without former experiences. In like manner, he worketh in believers, in dark times, when they cannot recal former experiences, and want present sense of Gods love, God quickeneth his people, by quickening their in looking to the naked promise, *Psal.* 119. 50. and thereby their hope also, *Isa.* 8. 17. Hence *Jacob* became such a mighty wraffler with God, *Gen.* 32. with *Hos.* 12. 4. God is ever mindful of his Covenant, *Psal.* 111. 5. and faithful in his Promises, *1 Thess.* 5. 24. Hope looks at the good of the Promise, and the goodnesse of the Promiser, for that part of the Promise, which is not yet performed, as  
faith

faith looks at the truth of the promise and faithfulness of the Promiser. Now, that hope thus grounded, is a right hope, may be proved; because, when faith in the Promises quickeneth and strengtheneth hope in believers, then Gods ends are attained, for which he giveth Promises. His ends are these, and the like: 1. To make known unto his people his good thoughts and purposes concerning them, *Jer.* 29. 10: This he doth, to incourage them to hope for a good end, and to endeavour, in the use of good means, to attainit, *verse* 11, 12. 2. To draw the Elect unto Christ, in whom all Gods promises are Yea, and Amen, *2 Cor.* 1. 20. 3. To shew what credit God hath in the hearts of his people, *John* 3. 33. 1 *John* 5. 9, 10. 4. To let believers see that they are richer, in their lowest estate, than others are in their greatest worldly possessions. For they have God himself, for their portion, when others have but his gifts, *Psalms* 4. 7. They have Christ, and *unsearchable riches* in him. *Eph.* 3. 8. who became poor,   
that,

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that, by his poverty, we might be made rich, 2 Cor 8. 9. They have spiritual riches, Rev. 2. 9. they are rich in faith, Jam. 2. 5. whereas others have only their bellies filled, Psal. 17. 14. Believers have a large estate in Promises, 1 Tim. 4. 8. which are Gods bills, and bonds, and deeds of gift, for a great while to come. 2 Sam. 7. 19. They have much in possession, and much more in hope, 1 Pet. 1. 3. so that, when we hope in his word, God attaineth his end in giving his word. Therefore hope grounded on the word, is a right hope.

2. By the formal act of hope, you may try, whether it is right or not. Expectation is the formall act of hope. This expectation hath three properties: 1. It's earnest, Phil. 1. 20. 2. It's patient, Rom. 8. 25. Patient, 1. O Labouring. 2. Of Suffering. 3. Of Waiting. Because between hoping and having, there is a want of the thing desired and promised, till Gods time, for performing comes. This delay is troublesome, Prov. 13. 12. Therefore we have need of patience, Heb.

*Heb.* 10. 35. The Husband-man soweth in hope, and waits with patience for the precious fruits of the earth, *James* 5. 7. which the Apostle there applies to believers. 3. With continuance, *Job* 14. 14. Such waiting on God gives him the glory of his independency, all-sufficiency, immutability, goodness, faithfulness, and wisdom, it hath great blessings, annexed to it, *Prov.* 8. 34, 35. *Isa.* 30. 18. *Isa.* 40. 31. The contrary is a compound of many sins, of pride, and impatience, *Psal.* 78. 41. and discontent, *2 Kings* 6. 33. and unbelief, *Isa.* 28. 16.

3. By the proper effect of this hope, you may know, it to be right; love floweth from faith and hope, *1 Cor.* 13. ult. especially, to God, in Christ, in whom we hope. Hence he that hath this hope, purgeth himself, as Christ is pure, *1 John* 3. 3. and is diligent in using all Gods means, with avoiding the contrary, *Heb.* 10. 22. to 26. with dependance on God, and trusting in him alone, not in our abilities, *1 Sam.* 2. 9. *Prov.* 3. 5, 6. or graces,

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graces, which gave Peter two falls, nor in our performances, *Psal.* 127. 1, 2. nor in the means themselves, *Hest.* 4. 14, 16.

Thus you see what are the characters of hoping in God aright; If upon tryal, you find them to be in you, in truth; that hope will not make you ashamed, but you shall have cause to say, with the Church, in *Isa.* 25. 9. *Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us, &c.*

The third Instruction is, How to exercise hope in God aright, in sundry cases, wherein you are called to practise it. These cases are of two sorts. 1. Such as concern mens private conditions. 2. Such as concern the public. The first sort of cases, which concern the private conditions of believers, are either for the present, or for the time past, or for the time to come. We shall shew how this hope is to be exercised, in these concerns, severally, and distinctly, with Gods assistance.

1. For the time present, when believers

Believers are under excessive grief, whatever is the cause of it ; whether sin or affliction, in your persons, or relations. Believers, as well as others, are subject to many afflictions, in this life, *Psal. 34. 19. Many are the afflictions of the righteous*, and, not of some one kind onely, but of divers kinds. *Job saith of every one, his flesh upon him shall have pain, and his soul within him shall mourn, Job 14. ult.* Herein two things are to be cleared. 1. That it is our duty to grieve under affliction, proportionately to the cause. It is dedolency, stupidity, not to grieve for afflictions, *Ier. 5. 3.* it is therefore our duty to grieve, when God afflicteth us, but more for Gods displeasure apprehended therein. 2. It is our duty to grieve more for sin then for affliction. 3. More for sin in our selves than in others And 4. For sin in our near relations more then in others more remote ; yet it is unlawfull to let grief exceed the proportion allowed by the rules of Gods Word, as all do, who have not this hope, *1 Thess. 4. 13.* The spirit

of man is by corrupt nature *unstable as water*, Gen. 49. 4. alwayes running forth, unless (as water is bounded by the bank or vessel into which it is put, so) our spirits be bounded and kept within Compass by the Spirit of God. Would you know when grief exceeds or is immoderate? You may know it by the effects. 1. If it distempers and hurts the body. Godly sorrow, as such, hurts no man, it is healing to the soul, and not hurtful to the body, unless, by accident, the body being before under painful distemper, which is apt to be increased by any grief. *Worldly sorrow causeth death*, 2 Cor. 7. 10. Worldly sorrow is, not only that which is for worldly things, but also that which is for sin, upon worldly respects, as the principal motives of it. And that sorrow hurts the body, and doth no good to the soul, as *David* found, when guile prevailed in his spirit, *Psal.* 32. 2, 3, 4. 2. If it hinders you from, or in, the performance of any duty. 1. From it. The good Thief on the Cross was in great grief;



grief; yet that did not hinder him from honouring Christ, nor from minding his own salvation, nor from rebuking his fellow, *Luke 23. 39. to 43.* Nor did Christs sorrow on the Crols, which was far greater than that Thiefs, take him off from minding the future good of his Mother, *John 19. 26* 2. In duty. It turned *Dauids* praying, wherein he should have exercised repentance, out of love unto God, into roaring, out of inordinate self-love, *Psal. 32. 3.* and it hindred the *Israelites* in hearing *Moses*, wh n he spake most comfortably to them, from receiving comfort thereby, *Exod. 6 9.* It is with the soul in this case as it is with the body. When Physick works upon the right humour, it carries away that which distempers without hurting the body. But, if it only exasperates the distemper, and removes not the cause; it doth hurt. 3. If your minds are so fixed upon a particular grievance that you cannot be duly thankful for other mercies, nor take comfort in them; like froward children, that being

crossed in one thing, throw away all the rest. For this *Joab* justly blamed *David*, though he erred in the manner, because he wept excessively for the death of *Absalom*, and did not rejoyce in the victory, and give thanks to God for it, 2 *Sam.* 19. 1. to 8. 4. If it inclines the will to seek ease and comfort, in some un-warrantable, and unsafe way. This is called *balting*, whereby men are turned out of the way, *Heb.* 12. 12, 13. 5. If the soul sinks, and faints under it, is wholly subdued by it, so as it cannot bear up it self. This is one of the extreame which wisdom forbids all her children to fall into, and which to forget is a sin, *Heb.* 12. 5.

Now the exercise of a right hoping in God, is of necessary use, in this case, to moderate sorrow, and to keep it within due bounds. This it doth, especially two wayes. 1. By striking at the root, and weakning the causes of it. 1. If it be for outward losses and crosses, hoping in God raiseth up the soul by looking up to God, and seeing that they are, either from him, as  
our

our God in Covenant. Thus it raised up *Job*, *Job*. 1. 21. and *David*, *1 Sam.* 30. 6. or that they are for God, and for their witnesse-bearing to his truth. This inabled the Saints of old, to take joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing in themselves that they had in heaven a better, and an enduring substance, *Heb.* 10. 34. 2. If it be from losse of dear relations, and Gods displeasure apprehended therein; this hope will quicken in you godly sorrow, and endeavours to seek reconciliation and peace with God, by repentance and faith in Christ, *Hos.* 6. 1. 2. It will purge out inordinate affections to the creatures, *1 John* 3. 3. over-grieving for the losse of creature-comforts ariseth from over-joying in creature-contentments. 3. If it be from bodily weakness, or sickness, or pain, or any distemper, that renders a man unserviceable in his place; this hope, being rightly exercised, will moderate that sorrow. 1. By bringing a spiritual light into the soul, to prepare it to receive comfort. For the body is compared to an house, and to

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a garment. Hence they can argue, *a pari*, the more worn and tattered the garment is, the sooner we shall have a new one. So it is with the soul, 1 Cor. 15. 42, 43, 44. And the more crzy and weak the house, or rather the prison is, the nearer the prisoner is to be delivered from it. So it is with the soul imprisoned in this earthly house of the body, 2 Cor. 5. 1, &c, 2. By quickening us unto those duties which such a condition calls for, *viz.* Patience, passive obedience, quietness, contentedness, prayer, &c. Psal. 39. 9, 10. 4. If it be from sin, in our selves, or others, or in our families and near relations; this hope will be of necessary use to keep the soul from being swallowed up with over much sorrow. He that grieves for sin, must grieve in hope. For a vexing, discouraging, despairing grief will do no good, but much hurt, as you may see in Jer. 18. 12. and Ezek 33. 10, 11. But that sorrow for sin which is accompanied with hope of mercy, quickeneth to prayer of faith, Job 7. 20. and to reformation, Ezra 10. 2, 3.

5. If

5. If it be from an apprehension that God is your enemy, and fighteth against you, as he is and doth sometimes, *Iſa.* 63. 10. this hope is of necessary use; whether your apprehension be right, or wrong. If it be so indeed, it will quicken you to make all speed to be reconciled unto God in Christ. Hereunto this hope encourageth: 1. From the mercy and grace of God in forgiving repenting sinners, *Pſal.* 130. 4. 2. From his willingness to deal so with you, declared sundry wayes. 1. By sending his Son to make atonement for lost sinners. 2. By sending his Embassadors to beseech you to be reconciled unto him, *2 Cor.* 5. 19, 20. 3. By his never refusing Rebels, that sought his favour in Christ, upon Gospel terms. 4. By his commanding us to forgive such as repent, though they have sinned against us unto seventy times seven times; and himself will not be behind us in mercy and kindness. 2. But if it be not so indeed; if God be not our enemy; this hope will awe the soul from wronging God, by our mis-apprehensions.

hensions. It is an injury to a man, that is our friend, and hath approved himself so to be, by many kindnesse, if we should charge him with enmity, and say to him, you do not love me, you hate me, you are mine enemy, when you cannot prove it. Hoping in God will arme the soul against such conclusions, by former experiences of sundry effects of Gods favour towards you, in pardoning some sins, subduing some lusts, healing some distempers, scattering some temptations, working some spiritual good in you; as, faith in the Lord Jesus, and love to all the saints, granting some prayers. Say not, I know not, whether God hath done thus, in mercy and favour toward me, and whether he will continue them unto me, or not; for these are Covenant mercies; and therefore sure mercies, even *the sure mercies of David, Isa. 55. 3.* Every answer of prayer, every gift of grace, that makes the more prayerful, humble, watchful, thankfull, serviceable, to God and man, that leads the soul to God, in Christ, is from his fatherly good.

goodness and love to thee in Christ. Say not, if God were my Father, I should see his face, but he hides his face from me; For that doth not alwayes follow. Sometimes children are infants, and know not their Father, though he acts for them, as a father. Sometimes grown children see not their father, many years together, yet rest in his fatherly love and care for them. So God will have his stronger children, many times, to *walk by faith and not by light*, 2 Cor. 5. 7. Sometimes the child, being forth at School, or at Prentiship, desireth earnestly to come home and see his father, but the father sees it to be inexpedient, at that time, to grant his request. But he will send him a letter, a token, a messenger, or some friend to visit him, he shall see him, in them, not in his person. So God deals, many times, with his children, who desire to see his face, to have sensible demonstrations of his favour and love to them. They shall see him, in his letters the Scriptures, and the Promises, or in some token of his

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love,

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love, some strength in their souls, *Psal.* 138. 3. or in some messenger, *Job* 33. 23. whom he sends to comfort them, and his spirit to quicken and strengthen them to wait upon him.

*Object.* But where the Spirit is, there are the fruits of the Spirit, and among the rest joy, *Gal.* 5. 22. which I want.

*Answer.* 1. Take a believer at the worst, he hath that joy which he would not part with, in exchange, for the joycondness of worldly men. 2. He hath true joy through faith, even when he is in heaviness, for a time, *1 Pet.* 1. 8. he hath it in the root, when it doth not sprout forth in leaves, because it is winter with him. He who desires spiritual joy, and greives for the want of it, hath true joy in some degree; as that man, from faith, bewailed his unbelief, *Mark* 9. 24.

The second way, whereby this hope boundeth and moderateth sorrow, is, by strengthening the soul to stick to right grounds of true comfort, to main-



maintain their joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, as their portion, not yielding up their purse to every thief, nor suffering themselves to be wrangled out of their right in it. If excessive sorrow begins to seize upon the soul of a believer; this hope will 1. Quicken him to examine its commission, by parlying with his soul, and enquiring whether there be good reason, a sufficient cause for it, or not, as *David* did, in *Psal.* 42. 5. 11. and 43. 5. *Why art thou cast down, O my soul, &c.* For sometimes your sorrow is causeless, and groundless, and commonly it is so: 1. When it is boundless. For reason will set bounds unto grief, but mistakes, and misapprehensions, know no bounds. 2. When it is plea-less, being tryed at the bar of right reason, or of the judgment of those who are godly-wise. *Job* in a passion challenged God himself to dispute, and gives him his choice, whether he will oppose, or answer, he will be for him, and fill his mouth with Arguments, and doubts, so that he shall carry the cause. But, when  
God

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God appeared, and spake to him, *Iob's* passion vanished, and his courage failed, and he confessed that he had spoken foolishly, and would now lay his hand upon his mouth. Compare *Iob* 23. 3, 4, 5. with *Chap* 40. 4, 5. and *Chap.* 42. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. So sometimes a dejected discouraged Christian thinks he hath so much to say against his comfort, as will put to silence the best and ablest Ministers. But when any judicious Minister, or experienced Christian, comes to him, he hath either nothing to say, or nothing of weight, but what is full of error and mistakes. Say therefore to your selves, in this case, as God did to *Jonah*, *Doest thou well to be angry? Do I well to be thus dejected?*

2. If there be cause for sorrow: 1. Examine, whether it be sufficient to justify such a measure or degree of sorrow, or not. That sorrow, which drives the soul from God, which indisposeth it to prayer, thanksgiving, to the duties of his calling, to works of mercy and love, that makes him jumpish, harsh, passionate, that sours and

and distempers his spirit, is excessive and immoderate. 2. Examine from what Topicks the Arguments are fetched, that are used to justify such a degree of sorrow. The soul of man should not be subjected to sense and feeling, or to any way of reasoning, but that which is from and according to the Word of God. To argue, that you have no faith, because you are full of doubting, that you have no grace, because you have strong corruptions, is to offend against the generation of Gods children, *Psal.* 73. 15. the vanity whereof *Asaph* saw, when he went into the Sanctuary of God. So will you, if you consult the Scriptures. 3. Fly to the God of comfort, *2 Cor.* 1. 3. First issue that great question, Am I Gods Child, or not? If not; rest not in that state, but hasten out of it. If yea, and thou art so, if thou hast his Image; then set faith on work: 1. Upon Gods all-sufficiency, and fetch all from heaven, which thou wantest on earth. 2. Upon his Efficiency:

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ciency : 1. Recal to mind what he hath done for thee in times past, as *Asaph* did, in *Psal.* 77. 5. 6. 2. For the future ; rest on his bare word, and promise, which shewes what he will do. Account that to be thine, which thou hast in grant by the promise, as *David* did, *Psal.* 60. 7. *God hath spoken in his holinesse, I will rejoyce, &c. Gilead is mine, &c.* Thus apply what *Christ* saith, in *Mat.* 5. 3. 4. 5. and the Scripture every where. 3. For the present : consider what God doth for thee. Doth he support thee, that thou sinkest not under despair ? Doth he keep thee in patience, and submission to his will, by hope ? Doth he quicken thee to use all good means, with waiting upon him ? Give him the glory of his grace, and be encouraged to spread before him, in prayer, all thy doubts, thy fears, thy temptations, and wants, *Phil.* 4. 6. and, with prayer, joyn hoping in him, and waiting on him. Say, There is mercy in him, to pity ; and power in him, to help ; though I find no comfort, yet, I hope, I shall ; though my prayers be  
not

not yet answered; I hope they will be, in the best season, and I will wait on God, till he doth answer them. If yet comfort come not; improve the communion of Saints, and the publick Ordinances, as *David, I will bearken what God the Lord will speak, Psal 85. 8.* use men and means, but let your hope be fixed upon God onely, look to him for comfort, *who creates the fruits of the lips, peace, Isa. 57. 19.* use the communion of the Saints, in private also; but so, as waiting for his manifesting himself to your soul, as the Church found he did, in *Cant. 5. 8. and 6. 3.* And, if thou canst not find out what particular hinders thy comfort, do as men use to do for their bodies, when the distemper is general, who make an issue, to draw the matter to some head; pitch upon some particular sin, to which thou art most subject, by natural inclination, or by thy calling, or company, or the condition of the times, and let out the corruption that may. Begin repentance there, and joyn with it faith in the blood of Christ, and so seek reconciliation

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conciliation with God, and comfort thereby. In thus doing, wait on God, till he satisfie thy thirsty soul, who hath promised, that *they, who wait on the Lord, shall renew their strength; they shall mount up upon wings, as Eagles; they shall run, and not be weary, and they shall walk, and not faint, Isa. 40. 31.*

The second case, whereon believers are called to exercise this hope, in their personal concernments, is, in reference to the time past, the seeming frustration and disappointment of their former expectations. For, having prayed and waited for the good desired, yet they have not obtained it. And many, when they have given up their names unto Christ, looked for peace, prosperity, and good dayes, but find troubles, crosses and afflictions of sundry kinds; this much disquieteth, and sometimes discourageth their spirits. Hence, they are apt to complain,, with the Church, in *Ier. 8. 15. We looked for peace, but no good came, and for a time of health, and behold trouble;* and, to conclude, as they did,  
in

in *Isa.* 49. 14. *Zion said, the Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.* In this case, that may be made for a right exercise of hoping in

God, I shall divide  
*Quosdam deserit,* distinguish the sub-  
*quosdam deserere* jects of it. 1.  
*videtur. Amb. in* There are some,  
*Psal.* 118. whom God for-  
 takes really. 1.

Such as forsake God. *If ye forsake him, he will forsake you,* 2 *Chron.*

15. 2. This is the condition of all Apostates, that depart from the rules of Gods worship, and the Churches of the Saints, embracing and following worldly policies and advantages.

2. Such as seem to seek God, but rest in outward performances without inward sincerity and spiritualnesse, and trust in their parts and gifts, and duties, not in Christ, for acceptance with God. This is the condition of all hypocrites, who sin and pray, and pray and sin, without true repentance, yet think to be accepted of God for the things they do in religion outwardly, of such the Lord saith, in *Hos.*

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5. 6. *They shall go with their flocks, and with their Herds to seek the Lord; but they shall not find him, he hath with drawn himselfe from them.* 3 Such as abuse the mercies they have received, and yet presume that mercies shall be still continued and added, though they go on in their impenitency. This is the condition of all obstinate, hard-hearted sinners These may receive their doom from that which the Lord denounced against Israel, in *Hos. 1. 6.* *Call her name Le rubamah; for I will not adde any more to shew mercy to them.* As if he had said, They have received many mercies from me, but they abuse them all, and presume that they shall receive more mercies from me: but it shall not be so. I will not adde any more. Of all these and the like, the Apostle saith, they are *without Christ, without God, and without hope, Eph. 2. 12.* therefore I have no more to say to them in this point. 2. There are others, whom God doth not forsake, really, but onely seemingly, and that, but in some respect, and, but for



a time. And that he is present with them graciously, when they think he hath forsaken them, appeareth by his efficacy in them. 1. That he quickens them to seek him in the use of all means, *Psal. 9 10 For thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.* 2. That they seek him, as their portion, as their chief good, without injoyment of whom nothing will satisfie them. This is from the efficacy of his grace in them, as it was in the Spouse, *Cant. 5. 4, 5, 6, 8, 10.* 3. That Gods withdrawing from them, in any degree, makes them fearful of his forsaking them utterly, and, for prevention thereof, careful to engage themselves to obey him more perfectly. Thus it wrought in David, *Psal. 119. 8. I will keep thy Statutes, O so sake me not utterly!* These are the persons, who are called to exercise hope in God, in this case. To instruct them how to perform this great duty aright, I shall propound five Directions.

1. *Direction.* Make it clear unto your own souls, that you have a good  
ground

ground of hope. See that your faith in God is right. For this hope is the daughter of faith. And, if you are in the dark, as to present sight of your good estate; consider whether formerly, when you had a clear light, you then knew that your soul said, the *Lord is my portion*. For it may be, at sometimes, with a true believer, spiritually, as it was with *Eutychus*, bodily, in *Acts* 20. 10. that, though life is in him, yet he hath not the sense of it. Then, though Gods face is towards him, yet he complains that he hath long hid his face from him; as *David* did, in *Psal.* 13. 1. and, if his Ministers speak comfortably to him; it is with him as it was with the people of *Israel*, when *Moses* spake as comfortably unto them as at any time, but they hearkened not unto *Moses* for anguish of heart, *Exod.* 6. 9. and, when he remembers God, he is troubled, and complaineth, and his spirit is over-whelmed, as *Asaph* found, in *Psal.* 77. 3. In this case, faith it self must be helped, by reflecting upon former

experience. This course *Asaph* took, and found relief by it, *ibid.* ver. 5, 6. So a believer having called to mind former passages between God and his soul, when he made diligent search and, upon tryal of his estate toward God, by Scripture light, found it to be good, hath good ground to hope in God, that it is so still, and that it will so continue for ever, and that from the sure Word of God in the Scripture, which assures us that Gods drawing us to himself, in Christ, is from his *everlasting love*, *Ier.* 31. 3. and that Christ, *having loved his own, which are in the World, loveth them unto the end*, *Iohn* 13. 1. and that *the gifts and callings of God are without repentance*, *Rom.* 11. 29. As a man, who hath deliberately cast up his accounts, and summed up the particulars exactly, when he took a fit season for it ; if afterward, when being sick, or in some hurry of business, he is not fit to review the particulars, he be demanded how the Accounts stand, he will refer himself to the foot of his Account, in a certain persuasion

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swasion that it is right ; so a believer, being under temptations and seeming desertion, may, and should exercise this hoping in God, and hath good ground so to do, from what he formerly found when he diligently searched into particulars, though now he cannot call them to mind. Or, as a woman with child, having felt it stir in her womb, knows thereby that she hath been quickened, and conceived, and hath thereby comforting hope that it will go on, though she doth not alwayes feel it stir ; So it is, in this case; and much rather, For, that conception may die, and the woman may miscarry; but so cannot the regenerate, *being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever, 1 Pet. 1. 23.*

2. *Direction.* When thus the ground of hope is cleared to be good, and way is made for the exercise of it ; then let it be exercised, in its purging work. This is the first use wherein hope is to be improved in this case.

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For every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as Christ is pure, 1 *Job.* 3. 3. Else that which now hindreth your comfort and peace, will hinder them, till it be taken away. Sin is the great impediment of all our good. This therefore must be the first work of this hope, the purging away of sin. Therefore the Church in my Text, took that course: Saying, *Let us search and try our wayes, and turn again to the Lord,* ver. 40. Do ye the like, in a like case, and that you may do so, follow these Directions. 1. Pray the Lord to shew wherefore he contendeth with you, *Job* 10. 2. with purpose of heart to forsake whatever sin provoketh him to anger. This was *Elihu's* counsel to *Job*. Surely, saith he, *It is meet to be said unto God, I have born chastisement, I will not offend. That which I see not, teach thou me; if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.* *Job* 34. 31, 32. Pray him also, to shew you what he would have you to do, as *David* prayd, in *Psal.* 86. 11. *Teach me thy way, O Lord, I will walk in thy*

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*thy truth ; unite my heart to fear thy name ; Pray him, that as he sends afflictions, so he would supply grace, that you may profit by them. For he is the Lord our God, the Holy one of Israel, our Redeemer, that teacheth us to profit. Isa. 48. 17. Repenting Ephraim found the benefit of this course. God took notice of their be-moaning themselves, with confession of their former unsubduednesse to Gods will and yoaK, and of their prayer, Turn thou me, and I shall be turned, thou art the Lord my God, Jer. 31. 18. What benefit had Ephraim hereby ? They tell that, in ver 19. Surely after I was turned, I repented, and, after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh, &c. 2. Having thus done, search the Scripture, and your own hearts, to find out the particular sin, or sins, which have brought this affliction upon you, or which do hinder the exercising of your hope. 1. To find out the particular sin or sins, which have brought the affliction upon you ; consider, 1. For what sins God hath threatned, in his Word,*  
or

or inflicted upon others, such judgments as are upon you, *Ezek.* 12. 25. *Jer.* 26. 4, 5, 6. *Zeph.* 3. 6, 7. 2. How you have abused those things wherein or whereby God afflicteth you. *Eli*, and *David* were too indulgent to their children, and were punished in them and by them. *Israel* abused the corn and wine, the wool and flax, the silver and gold that God had given them. Therefore God took them away; *Hos.* 2. 8, 9. God caused the Land to keep the Sabbaths, while the Jews were in Captivity, for their not sanctifying the Sabbaths, in their own land. And for their lightly esteeming the Word preached unto them, the Lord brought a famine of the Word upon them, *Amos* 8. 11. There is now much sicknesse and mortality among us; did you not mis-spend your time, and strength, in the dayes of your health? sundry are restrained from the publick Ordinances; Is it not because they have disregarded them, or been unfruitful and unprofitable under them? 3. Search, if you have not been faulty towards others, in

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the things you now suffer your selves. *They that spoiled and dealt treacherously with others, shall be spoiled and dealt treacherously with themselves, Isa. 33. 1. He that leadeth into Captivity, shall go into Captivity; he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Rev. 13. 10. He shall have judgment without mercy that hath shewed no mercy, Jam. 2. 13. Do others wrong you, in your names, in your estates, in any of their dealings with you? Consider, how you have wronged others. Are others helpless and hard-hearted towards you, in your afflictions? If upon search you find, that you have been so to others, give God the glory of his righteousness, and, with Adonibefek, as I have done, so hath God requited me, Judg. 1. 7. 4. If you have not profited by afflictions formerly upon you; you may justly suspect that he reneweth, and, it may be, increaseth your afflictions, for that cause. For so the Lord threatned his people of old, *If ye will not for all this (viz, former lesser punishments**



ments inflicted on you) bearken unto me, then will I punish you seven times more for your sins, Lev. 26. 18. and the same he repeats again and again, four or five times, in that Chapter: And he did accordingly, when the people of Israel turned not unto him that smote them, the Prophet told them, for all this, his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still, Isa. 9. 12. and it is thrice repeated, in that Chapter. So hath the Lord dealt with us, in this place; for sundry years past, he hath visited us with returns of sickneses, every following year sharper than the former, because whatever purposes men and women had, and whatever promises they made, when Gods hand was upon them, all wore off and came to nothing, after he had released them: So that we, in this wilderness, may be justly charged for dealing with God, as the people of Israel did in the wilderness, and have cause to expect, as they found from the Most High, Psal. 78. 32. to 38. In this case, God dealeth with his people, as Physicians

are wont to do with their patients, upon whom when they find that the physick formerly given doth not work, they second it with some stronger purge; and, when they find that the disease is so settled, that quicker courses are not effectual; they prescribe a course of longer continuance. 5. Search, to find out your own special corruptions; the finnes of your nature, whereunto you are naturally, that is, by your natural constitutions, more addicted and inclined, than unto other; the sins of your callings, that is, such as whereunto, by occasion of your place and vocation, or your course of life and conversation, you may have more and more frequent occasions of, and greater and stronger inducements, and inticements to, than others, and the sins of the times and places in which you live. This course *David* took, and thereby proved that he was upright before God, *Psal. 18. 23.* 6. Call to mind of what sins you have been formerly admonished and convinced publikely by the Ministers of the Word, or privately by godly friends,

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friends, and others; or secretly, by the motions of Gods Spirit, and checks of your own consciences, but have not repented of them, nor turned from them. For it is Gods manner, to open the ears of men, and to seal instructions by afflictions, as *Elihu* told *Job*, though he mis applied it to his case. *Job* 33. 14 to 30. 7. Having found out the particular causes for which God contendeth with you; add thereunto another search, to find out those sins which hinder the exercise of this hope more directly and immediately; as 1. Your aptnesse to haue hard thoughts of God. This is very injurious and dishonourable to God, and therefore he frequently in Scripture expostulateth with and complaineth of his people for it: As you may see in *Ier.* 2. 31. *Eze* 33. 10, 11. *Mich.* 6. 1, 2, 3. *David* found out this evil, in himself, and repented of it; as you may see, in *Psal.* 31. 22. and *116.* 11, 12. 3. Your aptnesse to be short spirited with God, which is contrary to the waiting of hope. This greatly incensed the wrath of God against his people of old, of

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whom it is said, in *Psal.* 78. 40. 41. *How often did they provoke him, in the Wildernesse, and grieve him in the Desert? yea, they turned back, and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.* So do all they, whose hoping in God ceaseth, if he do not grant them the particular thing which they expect, and in their time, and by their means. 3. Your unwarranted expectations of good, without mixture of any evil; of peace, without trouble; of health, without sickness; of ease, without pain; of joy, without sorrow; of prosperous successes, without crosses; which God hath nowhere promised; but hath fore-told the contrary every where in his Word; that he will visit our transgression with the rod, and our iniquities with stripes, *Psal.* 89. 32. and that we must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God, *Acts* 14. 22. and that whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth, *Heb.* 12. 6. And the reason why Christ fore-told these things, is, that, when they  
come

come to passe, we might not be offended, as himself saith, in *John* 16. 1. and that, when the time shall come, we may remember that he told us of them, as he saith, in ver. 4. 4. Your aptnesse to be slight spirited and carelesse in retaining the favour of God, and in maintaining the workings of his Spirit in you. The former, the Church found in themselves and confessed, in *Isa.* 64. 7. *There is none that calleth upon thy Name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee.* For the latter, the Lord reproveth the Church of *Ephesus*, though he took notice of many good things in them, and done by them: Nevertheless, he tells them, that he hath this against them, *that they had left their first love*, *Rev.* 2. 2, 3, 4. and commands them, *Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do thy first works: Else I will come unto thee quickly, &c.* ver. 5. 5. Be humbled for, and repent of your frustrating of Gods expectations, as the great provocation of God to dis-appoint your expectations.

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Consider, to this end, what God hath done for us, and therefore doth expect from us, in that which the Lord said concerning the house of *Israel*, in *Isa.* 5. 4, 5. and let us fear lest our unfruitfulnesse, unprofitablenesse, and un-answerableness to the means and mercies received, incense his wrath and jealousie against us more than against others, for whom he hath not done so much, as he hath done for us, For so he determined concerning *Israel*; *you onely have I known of all the families of the earth ; therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities, Amos* 3. 2.

2. Having thus searched and tried your wayes ; the next duty is, to *turn again to the Lord*, with unfeigned repentance, and faith in the blood of Christ, and amendment of life. This was the fruit of *David*, considering his wayes, - his turning his feet unto Gods testimonies, *Psal.* 119. 59. Else you do but, as if a wounded man should cry to the Chyrurgeon for ease of his pain, but will not endure to have the arrow head, or splinter, that sticks

sticks in his flesh, plucked out. If I regard iniquity in my heart, said David, the Lord will not bear my prayers, *Psal.* 66. 18. And the people of Israel found, that when they did evil as they could, and cast off the thing, that is good, and yet prayed unto God, as their God, he would not own them, nor accept their prayers, but upbraided them with their sins; as you may see, in *Jer.* 4. 4, 5. *Hos.* 8. 2, 3. Therefore the Church in my Text took a right course to strengthen their hope in God, when they resolved upon this order, first to search and try their wayes and turn again to the Lord, and, after that, to lift up their hearts, with their hands unto God in the heavens, *Lam.* 3. 40, 41. These things being done, that your hope may act aright.

3. The third Direction, which is to be attended, that you may exercise this hope, is to use this hope aright in its second work, for encouragement, by your cherishing in your selves good thoughts of Gods good purposes towards you, and expectation of good

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From God suitable to your needs : Hereunto the Lord encouraged the repenting Jews, in their Captivity in *Babylon*, *Jer. 29. 11. to 15.* Having promised them that, at the time appointed, he would visit them and perform his good towards them, in causing them to return, he acquainted them with his good thoughts towards them, as the reason of it, and what he would work in them, to fit them for that mercy; saying, *For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go, and pray unto me, and ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your hearts, &c.* Do not conclude concerning Gods thoughts towards you, by present sense and feeling, but by his own word. Therefore *David* resolved to hearken to what *God the Lord* saith, not to what carnal reason and sense would say, and the reason of his so resolving is drawn from the expectation of his hope; for



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he will speak peace unto his people, and to his Saints, Psal. 85. 8. and his expectation so grounded, was so strong, that he pleaded it with God, saying, in Psal. 119. 49, 50. Remember thy word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope. This is my comfort in my affliction, for thy word hath quickened me. And well may believers be strengthened in this hope, having it built upon so firm a foundation, as the word of God concerning which David saith, in the same Psal. ver. 89, 90. For ever O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven. Thy faithfulnesse is unto all generations; thou hast established the earth and it abideth. How is the earth established? we see, if you cast the least stone upwards in the aire, it abideth not there, but soon falls down to the earth; yet the earth it self, though it is an huge, vast heavy body, abideth in the air, wherewith it is surrounded, and wherein it hangeth. How is this done? It hath no pillars to hold it up, but the Decree and Word of that mighty God, who

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who upholdeth all things by the Word of his power, Heb. i. 3. His power accompanying his Word upholdeth the earth in the midst of the air, and shall it not support our hearts, in the midst of all temptations? If the greatnesse of your former sins, of which you have now repented, dismay you; remember what the word of the Lord saith, in Isa. 55. 7. *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will multiply to pardon.* Say not, I cannot think that God can have any good purposes and thoughts toward such a sinful wretch and rebel, as I have been. For, to prevent this, the Lord addeth, in ver. 8, 9. *My thoughts [are not your thoughts, neither are your wayes my wayes, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher then the earth, so are my waies higher then your wayes, and my thoughts then your thoughts.* If the Lord, in the time of your distresse, bring to your remembrance  
sins

sins formerly, many years past, committed by you, but not repented of, look at it, as an instruction, which he joyneth with correction, to awaken you to repentance, as he did *Josephs* brethren, when they were committed to prison, *Gen.* 42. 21. But, if sins committed before your calling, or since, but repented of, be set before you; do not think that they are unpardoned, or that the pardon is revoked, or that God doth it to upbraid you with them. God can, for holy and good ends, read over to his servants old bills of debt, which yet are cancelled, to humble them, and to make them more thankful, and more watchful. Thus he made *Job* possess the sins of his youth, *Job* 13. 26. And if the Lord defer the full and satisfying manifestation of his favour to you, after you have repented; do not impute that dispensation to his not forgiving your sins, but to his fatherly wisdom and love, to excite you thereby to perfect your repentance unto the full mortifying of your sins. As *David* dealt with *Absalom*, whom, though his

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his heart was towards him, and, as a token thereof, he sent for him to return to *Ierusalem*, yet he let him not see his face, for two years after his return, 2 *Sam.* 14. 14, 28. So the Lord dealt with *David*, he pardoned his sin. 2 *Sam.* 12. 13. yet withheld joy and gladnesse from him, till he had more thorowly repented, and fervently prayed that he would restore to him the joy of his salvation, *Psal.* 57.

The fourth Direction, is in reference to Gods delays; if yet you find not the good you seek then, exercise your hope in its third work, which is, waiting upon God. Hereunto the Lord encouraged his people in Captivity, by a Vision, concerning their deliverance, which the Prophet *Habakkuk* received from God, and of which the Lord said, *The Vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry, Hab.* 2. 3. Set down this for a concluded truth, which every true beiever may rest

rest upon, that, the Lord will not cast off for ever, but, though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies, Lam. 3. 31, 32. And, that he may do so, he waiteth for a fit season. For he is a God of judgment, as *Isai-*ah saith, in *Isa*, 30. 18. Therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you; and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you. For *Jehovah* is a God of judgment. Blessed are all they that wait for him. The Lord waits for a time, wherein he shall be exalted in being gracious unto his people. That time is the time of their renewed repentance and conversion unto God, as to the Most High. Then God will have the highest place in their hearts. Pray that this may be wrought in you, and that thereby you may be fitted for the good you hope for, and wait for it, till Gods time comes. For all they are blessed that wait for him. They are now blessed in their state, and they shall be blessed in their enjoyments. In the mean time, they that wait upon the

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*the Lord, shall renew their strength : they shall mount up with wings as Eagles, they shall run, and not be weary, they shall walk, and not faint, Isa. 40. 31.*

The fifth Direction is, in reference to afflictions continuing upon you ; while God delayes his bestowing the good you wait for, exercise your hope in its fourth work, which is patience. Wait with patience, *For, if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it, Rom. 8. 25.* It is Christs precept, *In your patience possesse your souls, Luke. 21. 19.* As faith gives us the possession of Christ, so patience gives us the possession, first, of our selves, and then of all good things. *Let patience have its perfect work, saith the Apostle, Jam. 1 4.* This it hath two wayes : 1, When it puts forth perfect acts, whereunto it ariseth by certain steps. The first is a silent submission, with a voluntary resignation of our selves to the will of God. So *David* did, and said, *I opened not my mouth, because it was thy doing, Psal. 39. 9.* The second is, a  
thank-

thankfull acceptation of the affliction, with, as it were, a kissing of the Rod, where-with our heavenly Father correcteth us. This is that, which, in a soul truly humble, is called *the accepting of the punishment of his sin*, *Lev. 26. 41.* unto this step *Jobs* patience ascended, who said, when he had lost all his creature-possessions, *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken, and blessed be the Name of the Lord, Job. 1. 21.* The third, and highest step, is, to count it all joy, when ye fall into divers temptations, *Iam. 1. 2.* This is the highest step, for perfecting the actings of patience: Therefore he addeth to that, *Let patience have its perfect work*, to shew that then it hath it. The second way whereby patience comes to have its perfect work, is, when patience perseveres in acting. *The good ground*, saith Christ, *is the honest and good heart that brings forth fruit with patience, Luke 8. 15.* where *υπομονη*, signifies both patience and perseverance. It is not sufficient to be patient in some troubles, but it must be exercised in all ;

all; nor, at sometimes onely, but alwayes; and then onely and not else, patience hath its perfect work, and when patience hath its perfect work, then every grace hath its perfect work.

The third case, wherein we are to be instructed, how to exercise this hope aright, in our private and personal concernments, is, in reference to the times future. When fears of evils do come disquiet mens minds and hearts, many secret mis-givings of heart are incident even to true believers, by reason of the flesh remaining in them, in part, that sundry outward afflictions, by crosses, or losses of dearest relations, or of the means of outward subsistence, or of liberty, or of life, may befall them: or inward temptations and sins may prevail against them; which fears do usually dis sweeten to them present mercies and accordingly hinder their thankfulness to God for them. Therefore the instruction is of great importance, and of continual use, which we are now upon. For the more distinct handling where-



whereof I shall endeavour to clear two things. 1. Something concerning such fears. 2. How this hope is to be exercised about them.

1, For the first. Fear is an affliction acted and exercised upon the apprehension of some impendent and approaching evil. This fear is, sometimes culpable, sometimes commendable. 1. Fear is culpable, and a sin, when it is opposite to trusting in God, of this *Solomon* saith; *The fear of man bringeth a snare; but who so trusteth in the Law shall be set on high, Prov. 29. 5.* He shall be set above the reach of snares, and so be safe. This fear may be known by three characters, 1. By its rise, when it ariseth from distrust in Gods promises and providence. This is an habitual, ruling, distemper in all natural men; it is not so in the regenerate; yet, by the strength of temptation, and the flesh, in them, it sometimes prevails actually. Hence *David* discovered a suddain perturbation of his mind, by unadvised speeches, which were dishonourable to God, when he said, *I shall perish*

one day by the hand of Saul, 1 Sam. 27. 1. and, I said in my heart all men are liars, Psal. 116. 11. 2. By its immediate object; whether, it be sin, or trouble. 1. Fear least they should hereafter fall into such or such a sin, fixeth their thoughts upon sin, and in-snares them in sin. It is very dangerous to propound to a mans self any thought of sin, as sin, especially, of the materials of sin. For such is mans weakness, and Satans subtilty, that the contemplation of sin in the thoughts, though it be not done with any intent to commit it, but to avoid it, defiles the soul, before men are aware. For sin is a defiler, and leaves a stain behind it, whereby thoughts of sin soon become sinful thoughts, and the speculation of sin falls into speculative acting sin. Hereof the Apostle James warneth us, in Jam. 1. 14. Saying, Every man is tempted, when he is drawn aside of his own lust, and enticed; Then, when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, &c. 2. Fear of future troubles and sufferings, arising from fore. thinking them, becomes blame-worthy,

three

three wayes. 1. When they imagine such as are never likely to befall them, and are disquieted with fears of them, This is to fear shadowes ; which argueth weaknesse in the judgment, or guilt in the conscience. That may be said to such truly, which Zebul spake to Gaal scoffingly ; *Thou seest the shadowes of the mountains, as if they were men, Jud. 9. 36.* It is threatened for a punishment upon sinners, in *Lev. 26. 36.* and executed upon them, in *Prov. 28. 1. 2.* When they think of future evils, which are but possible, and, at the most, but probable, with such terror, as if they were certain and inevitable ; and so give certain strength to an uncertain crosse. This God reproveth, in *Isa. 57. 11. 3.* When they multiply and magnifie evils that are to be expected as certainly future, above their due proportion, and so fear lesser evils, as if they were the greatest evils. Christ warned his Disciples of this, in *Mat. 24. 28.* The third Character of such fears, is the evill effects of them. 1. *Bondage*, which is contrary to faith,

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*Rom. 8. 15. 2. Torment, which is contrary to love, 1 Job, 4. 18. 3. Discouragement, from using good means for the prevention of the thing feared. Hence the distrustful Jews rejected the Prophets exhortation to conversion; saying, if our transgression, and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them; how should we then live, Ezek. 33: 10. 4. Venturing upon the use of unwarranted means to avoid the thing feared; whereby they bring it upon themselves. Thus Saul, fearing that, if David lived, his posterity should not succeed him in the throne, sought to kill him; and the Sanhedrim fearing that, if Christ were let alone, all men would believe in him, and the Romans would come, and take away both their place and Nation; concluded, that Christ must be put to death. Both brought upon themselves that which they feared, by the wrath of God against them, for using ill means to avoid it. According to Gods threatening denounced against all such, in Prov. 10, 24. The fear of the wicked shall come upon him.*

2. Fear is commendable, and good, and our duty, when it hath hope in Gods mercy joyned inseperably with it. Of this fear David saith, Behold, *the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy, Psal. 33. 18.* Again, *The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him; in those that hope in his mercy, Psal. 147. 11.* This filial reverential fear of God may be known by three Characters. 1. By the rise of it; it ariseth from faith. *By faith Noah moved with fear prepared an ark, Heb. 11. 7.* 2. By the direct and immediate object of it, which is God himself. This was so eminent in *Izback*, that God hath a denomination from *Izbacks* fear of him, he is called the *fear of Izback*, *Gen. 31. 53.* When others fear men, fear poverty, fear disgrace, a believer feareth God, the Majesty, Authority, power of the great God is strong upon his heart. This makes him careful to worship God, according to his revealed will, and to walk uprightly before God, to honour, serve, and please

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please him in his whole conversation, and to seek the face of God in Jesus Christ. 3. By its effects, which are such as these: 1. It keeps from carnal security, and placing our rest and contentment in worldly things. Thus it wrought in *Job*, whilst he lived in outward prosperity. Therefore he said in his affliction; *the thing that I greatly feared is come unto me. I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet*, *Job* 3. 25, 26. and from trusting in spiritual priviledges and graces received: whereof *Paul* warneth all Gentile-Christians, saying, *be not high minded but fear*, *Rom.* 11. 20. 2. It makes men careful to avoid what might provoke God against them, and bring on them the evil feared. Hence they fear and avoid sin, as a deadly snare. *The fear of the Lord, is a well spring of life, to depart from the snares of death*, *Prov.* 14. 27. 2. Hardnesse of heart, as a mischievous evil, *Prov.* 28. 14. *Blessed is the man, that feareth alwayes, but he that hardeneth his heart, shall fall into mischief*. 3. Departing from God.

God, so saith God, *I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me, Jer. 32. 46. 3.* This fear quickens to use all good means to fence our selves against future evils; as fear of an inundation causeth men to raise banks for keeping out the Sea, &, if a breach be made, to repair it speedily. Thus this fear wrought in *Jacob*, when *Esau* came out against him; and in *Noah*, to provide against the deluge; and in those *Egyptians*, to keep themselves and their Cattle in their houses, to escape the storm, which *Moses* fore-told would kill all that were in the field. The more we are prepared, by this fear for afflictions, before they come, the less shall we be oppressed with them, when they come. For thereby, either afflictions shall be weakned, and less able to hurt us, or we shall be strengthened, and more able to bear them. Now, this hope, whereof we speak, being rightly exercised, will be of great efficacy, to quicken good fear, and to subdue sinful fear in us. Therefore, I shall endeavour to shew you how you may exercise this hope aright in four Directions. I 1. Lay

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1. Lay a sure ground-work for this hope to be built upon. This is then done, when you know that your soul faith, the Lord is your portion. For, 1. This will assure your interest in God himself, who is an all-sufficient portion. When you can say, with *David*, *The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my Cup*, *Psal. 16. 5.* you may comfortably add, as he did, in *ver. 6.* *The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places: yea, I have a goodly heritage.* 2. This will cause you to cleave to the Lord with purpose of heart, as *Barnabas* exhorted the *Antiochians* to do, in *Acts 11. 23.* *For where a mans treasure is, there will his heart be also,* *Mat. 6. 21.* As the needle in the Compass, being touched with the Load-stone, is in continual motion, till it points to the North; the reason whereof, some conceive, is, because in the North are Rocks of Load-stone, with which the needle so touched hath a sympathy: so the soul being touched by the spirit of Faith, is in continual motion, till it points unto God in Christ,



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Christ, that living Rock and true Load-stone, who draws believers to him by a spiritual sympathy which they have with him; as he said in *Job 12. 32. I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.* Then, and not before, they have true rest. Then they may say with *David; Return unto thy rest, O my soul! Psal. 116. 7.* 3. This will settle and strengthen your hearts against all distracting, discouraging, distrustful fears about future evils. For, *things to come are yours, when you are Christs, 1 Cor. 3. 22, 23.* The worst that can befall you, shall not loose that blessed union that is between God in Christ and your souls. Not sin past, for that is already pardoned; and therefore shall not condemn you hereafter, *Rom. 8. 1.* nor shall sin to come have dominion over you, *Rom. 6. 14.* For you are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, *1 Pet. 1. 5.* Nor death, though it may separate two near friends, the soul and body; yet it shall joyn together more fully and perfectly two better friends,

Christ and the soul, which, when it is absent from the body, is present with the Lord, *2 Cor. 5. 8.* and, in the Resurrection, when both shall be reunited, *we shall be for ever with the Lord, 1 Theff. 4. 17.* Nor temptations; See how *Paul* triumphed over all principalities and powers, over life and death, over things present and to come, in assurance that nothing should separate him, or any true believer, from the love of God in Christ Jesus, *Rom. 8. 38, 39.* yea, *that all things should work for his and their good, Rom. 8. 28.* A believer in Christ is as sure of the time to come, as he is of the time present or past. For he can say, with the Church, in *Pf. 48. ult.* *This God is our God, and he will be our guide unto death;* and can look unto Christ, as *Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty, Rev. 1. 8.* and he hath the promises of God in Christ for the future, *Isa. 46. 3, 4. Joh. 10. 27, 28, 29.*

2. This ground-work being well laid, build upon it, for the future, by exercising this hope, 1. In its purging work,

work, 1 *Joh.* 3. 3. to purge out inordinate affection, whereby the soul cleaves close and fast to present things and creatures, whence, they are as afraid to part with them, as one is to have a piece of linnen cloth or plaister plucked off from an ulcerous sore, whereunto it sticketh so fast, that it can hardly be pulled away without great pain, and without drawing the skin and part of the flesh with it; whereas if that ulcerous matter were purged, and the sore healed, the plaister would fall off it self, and the cloth might be taken away; without any pain or difficulty. Hoping in God, being rightly exercised, worketh this great cure, by rectifying mens apprehensions concerning the creatures, and ordering their affections aright towards God, looking at both with the eye of faith, by Scripture light, which represents all things, out of God in Christ, when they become the objects of our hope, as vain, and sinful and hurtful. The creatures are good, as they come out of Gods hand; but as they are abused, by being idolized,

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they become vain, and degenerate into nothing. For as *an idol is nothing in the world*, 1 Cor. 8. 4. nothing, which men account it to be, not to be trusted in. So, creatures are but vain and empty, like those blasted eares of corn, in *Pharaohs* dream, unless God fills them with his blessing. It is a common errour and delusion, to think that, if you had such friends, such relations, such estates, &c. you should live happily and comfortably. For, as *David* said of an horse, in reference to getting the victory, *an horse is a vain thing*: So we may say of all creatures being separated from God, in reference to happiness and comfort, they are vain things to be trusted in, for which Christ called that rich man a fool, *Luke* 12. 19, 20. 2. It is a sin against the first Commandment, to give the honour which is due to God alone, unto any creature, as men do that glory in them, *Ier.* 9. 23, 24. and *set their hearts upon them*, *Psal.* 62. 10, 11. This is idolatry, *Col.* 3. 5. It is Atheisme, a denial of Gods all-sufficiency, which is his

his peculiar glory, and the foundation of upright walking in the Saints, *Gen.* 17. 1. Its the cause of all sins. The Schoolmen do rightly define sin to be an aversion of the soul from the immutable God, and turning of it to the mutable creature. For all sin implies an over-valuing of the creatures, and an undervaluing of God. See with what indignation God reproves this sin, in *Jer.* 2. 13, 14. 3. Thus to cleave unto present things and creatures, is very hurtful to your selves. For, 1. It steals mens hearts from God (as *Absalom* stole the hearts of the people from *David*) unto things that cannot profit, nor deliver, for they are vain, *1 Sam.* 12. 25. 2. It provoketh God to withdraw and withhold his concurrence and blessing from the creatures, without which you cannot have any good from them, nor by them; your own experience may convince you of this. For hence it is that the creatures work unequally, not alwayes one way; friends and other things, sometimes comfort us, sometimes afflict us. Physick could not

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cure *Asa*, because he trusted in the Physicians more than in God; that all may see, creatures cannot of themselves do us any good, but as God worketh by them and with them, whose peculiar glory it is to *do good or evil*, *Isa.* 41. 23. 3. It provokes God to hide his face from you; and then, though your mountain stand, you will not have peace, as *David* found, in *Psal.* 30. 6, 7. Yea, to fill you with terrours in the midst of your jollities, as he did *Belshazzar*, in *Dan.* 5. yea, to reject your prayers, in the day of your distress, and to send you to your Idols for help, as he did those, in *Judg.* 10. 13, 14. *For they that observe lying vanities, forsake their own mercies, Jon.* 2. 8.

3. The third direction is, to exercise this hope in its quickening work. For this hope *is a lively hope*, *1 Pet.* 1. 3. it being quickened by the *live-making spirit*, hath lively operations and efficacy, in the souls of believers to quicken true child-like *fear of God* in them, which is *the beginning of wisdom*, *Prov.* 1. 7. for, though know-  
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ledge and faith go before it, yet there is no true wisdom in either of them, unless they work in a man this fear. This fear will make us stand in awe of God, when we see the effects of his wrath upon others. So it wrought in *David*, when he saw *Uzzah* smitten dead, in *2 Sam.* 7. 6. 9. and when he saw that God did put away the wicked as dross, *Psal.* 119. 12. and in all that heard of the dreadful stroke of Gods vengeance upon *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, in *Acts* 5. 10, 11. It will make men tremble at his word, *Isa.* 66. 2. at the commands of the word, lest they should disobey them; at the threatnings of the word, lest they should fall under them, *2 Kings* 22. 19. at the promises of the word, lest they should fall short of them, *Heb.* 4. 1. This fear breeds care, and quickens to self-humbling, putting his mouth in the dust, if there may be hope, *Lam.* 3. 29. and to speedy reformation; as we see in that speech of *Shecaniah* unto *Ezra*, *Ezra* 10. 2, 3. and to fervent prayer; as we see it wrought in *Jacob*, *Hos.* 12. 4. with

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*Gen.* 32. and *Hezekiah*, *Ier.* 26. 19. and the King and people of *Niniveh*, *Jon.* 3. 5. and the Prophet *Habakkuk*, *Hab.* 3. 16. It quickens believers to seek access unto God by the Mediator, *Deut.* 5. 27, 28, 29. and therefore to flie unto Christ, as chickens get under the wings of the hen, in affrightments, and to trust in God, through Christ, and in his word. So it wrought in *David*, *Psal.* 56. 3. Lastly, it quickens us to fear the Lord and his goodness, *Hos.* 3. 5. it will not suffer men to be wanton upon the goodness of God, to slight his goodness, to do evil, because God is good; or to sin, that grace may abound: but it will cause them to fear the Lord and his goodness, fear to offend his goodness. The goodness of God will strongly engage their hearts to walk closely and uprightly with God.

4. The fourth Direction is, to exercise this hope in its encouraging and strengthening work, to establish and settle our hearts against all discouraging distrustful fears: 1. Of evil



tidings, *Psal.* 112. 1. 7. 2. Of evil times; when all things are turned upside down, and the mountains, Princes and great Potentates, render themselves terrible to the Church and people of God, and the prophane multitude rage against them, like the roaring of the waters, and they can have no rest in their dwellings; yet they, the Church and people of God, shall have sweet refreshments, by the Promises and Ordinances, as they of *Jerusalem* had by the waters of *Siloah*, and safety, by the protection of God, who is their refuge, and a present help in times of trouble; as it is excellently expressed, in *Psal.* 46. 3. Of the prosperity and opposition of evil men, against which *David* comforted himself by hoping in God, *Psal.* 49. 5. 16. and, upon his experience encouraged all believers to take the same course, *Psal.* 27. 1, 2, 3, 13, 14. 4. Of whatever may or can befall them in this World, *Psal.* 91. 1. &c. For, 1. God is graciously present with them, *Rom.* 8. 31. Therefore they may be confident of safety against future

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 ture evil, as *David* was, *Psal.* 23. 4. Though armies should surround them, as the *Syrians* did *Elisha*, they have no cause of discouraging fears; for, if the Lord open the eyes of their faith, they may see an invisible guard of Angels about them, as *Elisha's* servant saw about his Master, *2 Kings* 6. 15. 2. They are dear to God, as the apple of his eye, *Zach.* 2. 8. 3. All future events are in Gods, not in their enemies, nor in their own hands, *Psal.* 31. 15. 4. They have the sure word and promises of God, for them, *Isa.* 41. 10, 11, 12. and 43. 1, 2. 5. God is, in all the changes that pass over them, unchangeable, as in himself, *Jam.* 1. 17. so in his love to them, *Jer.* 31. 3. and in his faithfulness in his promises, *Psal.* 56. 4. to whom they are called to commit their souls in well-doing, as into the hands of a faithful Creator, *1 Pet.* 4. 19. doing their own duties, and leaving events to God, as *Jacob* *Gen.* 43. 14. *Hest.* 4. 16. and they in *Dan.* 3. 16, 17, 18.

The second case, wherein we are to be instructed how to exercise this,  
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in reference to the publick state of the Churches of Christ under persecution, and the oppression of enemies, remains to be spoken to. Which that I may the more distinctly and fully declare; I shall endeavour to clear two things: 1. What the present condition of all the Protestant Churches, throughout *Europe* is. 2. How we may and ought to exercise this hope, in reference thereunto.

1. To clear the first, I shall give you a true Narrative of the Protestant Churches, in *Europe*, singly and severally considered, as I have received it from a faithful

Mr. Duries K. . . and unquestionable hand. 1. the Churches in *Poland, Bohemia, Moravia, Austria, and Si-*

*presentation of the state of the Protestant Churches in Europe.*

*lesia*, which were, not long since, many and flourishing, are now wholly dissipated and wasted. 2. Though some Churches remain in *Transylvania* and *Hungary*, yet they are in danger to be ruined by any advantage of pow-

power which the house of *Austria* may get against them. 3. In *Germany*, the Churches are so divided, and the Protestant States are so distracted, that, not only all concurrences in a common way, for their mutual edification and preservation are hindred; but also, as the *Lutheran* Party, by their contentious ministry, hath set it self to destroy the rest; so God hath suffered their chief Protectors, the Kings of *Sweden* and *Denmark*, to destroy each other. And the Electors of *Saxony* and *Brandenburg*, not respecting the safety of their Churches, do serve the *Austrian* design against the Protestant interest. Nor is there any considerable Prince in *Germany*, except the *Landsgrave* of *Hessen*, that is able to do any thing of moment to maintain that interest. 4. In the low Countreys, their present actings tend rather to serve the enemies design against the Protestant Interest, then for it. 5. In *France*, the Protestant Churches are deprived of their former priviledges. So that their standing is a meer tolleration, at pleasure, 6. In

*Geneva*, we are informed, from other hands, that the Duke of *Savoy* would impose a Governour and a Bishop upon them, or, in case, of their refusal, threatens to besiege them; and that the King of *France* refuseth to protect them, unless they will receive a Bishop. 7. In the vallies of *Pi-emont*, the Duke of *Savoy* doth still most cruelly, though not openly, oppress and vex the Protestants, notwithstanding the peace made with them; by giving them up to the power of the Popish Inquisition, which threatens their utter ruin, if God doth not prevent it. 8. In *Switzerland*, the Pope and the *Austrians*, have stirred up and hired the Popish Cantons to break their fundamental League with the Protestants, by persecuting to death or banishment all such as leave their superstitions to become Profelytes to us. 9. How it is with our Native Countrey, *England*, and those conjoyned with it, in *Scotland* and *Ireland*, you have formerly heard, in part, and may have more hereafter. 2. If we add hereunto the  
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great advantages which the Popish party hath against the Protestant, and what posture the Protestant Churches are in, in respect of their mutual relation each to other, to oppose this combination of their enemies, so strongly and universally laid; it will be manifest that the Antichristian party had never so great advantage against the Churches of Christ, since the Reformation began, as now they have. For, 1. Whereas formerly the Popish parties were divided, now, their differences being composed, they are all united in one common design against the Protestant Religion and Churches; and their head, the Pope, doth manage their common interest with much subtilty and vigour, and that openly, by innumerable Agents and Emissaries, who are subordinate to the *Congregation de propaganda fide*, who creep into all Protestant States and professions, to observe any distance or divisions among them, to widen and foment the same in the minds of the common sort, and to cast stumbling blocks cunningly before all

all the rest, and thereupon to insinuate the more plausibly their own superstitions. Hence, in *France*, where the Popish Inquisition was not formerly admitted, it is now of late introduced under a new name of *the Congregation de propaganda fide*, which is an Inquisition in effect, and hath begun to act there with publick Authority, prohibiting all commerce from abroad, for the vent of Divinity books; in so much that they do not suffer Bibles brought from *Geneva* to be sold any where, but do confiscate them. And in every City in *France*, where a Church of Protestants is, there is also a certain number of Emis-saries, belonging to *the Congregation de propaganda fide*, seiled, to oppose and vex them. And it is intended that this design shall be prosecuted universally against all Protestant Churches in other places, so soon as the Protestant States shall be sufficiently weakned, by divisions among themselves. 2. It is greatly to be lamented; that, whilst Satans Instruments are so active and united to advance

vance his Kingdom; we who are subjects of Christs Kingdom, and so many wayes bound to advance it, are so careless of Christ his interest, that, on the one hand, licentiousness, prophaneness, heresies, blasphemies, and wickednesses break forth, to the reproach of Christian Religion; and, on the other hand, the divided professors thereof seek & follow eagerly their own advantages, of power and places, to undermine the settlement of each other; and while the enemies have Agents every where, & an universal correspondence to weaken us by division, & then to ruin us; no such way of Agency or correspondency is set on foot by publick Authority among us, to ingage the godly-wise & peaceable to joyn with us to lay the common-Gospel-interest to heart, and to communicate counsel & assistance each to other, at least, to pray for one another suitably to the exigencies of things, that when help faileth on earth, it may be procured from the mighty God immediately. For which the Lord may justly dash us into pieces, one against another, as vessels unfit for his honour & service.



2. This being the present state of all the Churches of Christ in *Europe*, I proceed to instruct you to exercise this hope aright, in reference thereunto : Which that I may do, I must clear two things : 1. What disposition of spirit is necessary to qualify the person, to make him a fit subject of this hope. 2. How they who are thus qualified must exercise it.

1. For the first; whosoever would have and exercise this hope in reference to the publick state of the afflicted Churches of Christ, they must have and exercise publick Spirits in the communion of Saints, that is, they must be sanctified by faith in Christ, and joyned unto Christ visibly, as the head of his Church, in communion with the Church, which is the body, and take to heart the publick state of the Churches, and Christ his interest in them, whatever their own private condition is, and to prefer the publick concernments before and above their own private, in their judgments, affections, and indeavours. We must esteem that spiritual Society,  
and

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and the concernments of it, as more  
considerable than our own. Hereof  
God himself gives us example, who  
preferres his Church before and above  
all the World besides, as his *chief*  
*treasure*, *Exod.* 19. 5. his *jewels*,  
*Mal.* 3. 17. tells them that they are  
so *precious in his sight, and honou-*  
*rable and loved of him*; that he will  
give men for them, and people for  
their life, *Isa.* 43. 4. as he did call  
off *Senacherib* from *Jerusalem*, by  
sending *Tirrhaka* the King of *A-*  
*thiopia*, to invade his land, and so  
gave both *Aethiopians* and *Aegypti-*  
*ans* into his hand, to free his Church  
from him. Now, Gods judgement of  
persons and things should be the rule  
of our judgement. For we know that  
the judgement of God is according to  
truth. So did *Moses*, whose love act-  
ed so highly from his high esteem of  
the Church and Gods interest of ho-  
nour in it, that, though God offered  
to make him a great Nation, if he  
would let him alone, that he might  
consume *Israel* in the *Wilderness*,  
*Exod.* 33. 10. yet he was so far from ac-  
cepting

cepting it, that he prayed the Lord to forgive their sin, and, if not, to blot him out of the Book which he had written, *ver. 32.* David was so strongly engaged in his affections to the Church of God, that if all his petitions were to be put into one, it should be this, that he *might dwell in the house of the Lord, to behold his beauty there, Psal. 27. 4.* he had rather be one day there, than a thousand elsewhere, and to be a Door-keeper in Gods House, than to dwell in the Tents of wickedness, *Psal. 84. 9, 10.* The place of the publick holy assemblies was a Tent, a Tabernacle, an unfixed, a moveable place, yet he calls that an House, a fixed Mansion. The people dwelt in houses firmly built upon foundations; yet David accounted the houses of wicked men Tabernacles; he looked for no stability in the World, but only in the Church and fellowship of those that are in Covenant. See how affectionately he speaks of Church Assemblies and Communion with them, *Psal. 122. 8, 9.* of the same mind and spirit

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rit were the Saints in the Babilonish  
Captivity, *Psal. 137. 5, 6.* And the  
same spirit works thelike disposition  
in all the members of Christs mystical  
body; *whether one member suffer, all  
the members suffer with it; or one  
member be honoured, all the members  
rejoyce with it, 1 Cor. 12. 26.* And  
they see good reason for their so act-  
ing in the concernments of the Church  
of Christ. For, 1. They know  
that God hath recorded his Name  
there; and his Name is put upon  
Church members, and therefore his  
Name is honoured, or dishonoured,  
as things are well or ill with his  
Church. Hence it was, that *Josua* was  
so exceedingly afflicted for the flight  
of the people before *Ai*, though but  
about thirty six were slain; *what shall  
I say, when Israel flies before the  
enemies? and the Canaanites will hear  
of it, &c. and what wilt thou do to  
thy great Name? Josh. 7. 8, 9.*  
Therefore Christ teacheth us to joyn  
these together immediately; *Hallow-  
ed be thy Name: Thy Kingdom come,*  
to shew us that answerable to the well  
being

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being of the Church, which is the Kingdom of grace, will be the honour of Gods Name, in this World. 2. They know that the welfare of all States and People, where Churches are, depends upon the welfare of the Church. For so runs the promise; *Israel shall be a blessing in the midst of the Land, Isa. 19. 24.* Hence it was that the Saints could not be satisfied with their own private welfare, if the Church of God was in affliction and danger, or under reproach. As you may see in *Uriah, 2 Sam. 11. 11.* in *Nehemiah, Neh. 1. 3, 4.* with 2. 2, &c. and in *Daniel*, though he was as highly preferred, as a subject could be, in the greatest Monarchy, *Dan. 10. 2, 3.* Hence also, when there hath been a double affliction upon them, both publick and private; the publick hath swallowed up the private, and made it inconsiderable, in comparison. As we see in *Eli. 1 Sam. 4. 18.* and his daughter in law, the wife of *Phineas, ver. 21. 22.* Lastly, hence it was, that when they have had a double opportunity,  
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of doing or procuring good to the publick, and to their own private; they have preferred the publick advantage before their own private interest. Thus *Terentius* a Christian Commander in the Wars under the Emperor *Valens*, who was an Arrian, being willed by that Emperor, for a special service done by him, to demand what he would, made his petition to the Emperor, which he presented to him in writing; that the Christians might have the liberty of a Church by themselves, to worship God apart from the Arrians. The Emperor read his petition, and disliking it, tore it, and threw it away. *Terentius* meekly gathered up the scattered pieces, and professed to the Emperor, that, if he could not be heard in Gods cause, he would not make any suit for his own profit. How may this worthy man shame most Christians, in these dayes, who, if their garners may be full, their sheep multiply, their oxen be strong to labour, their sons be as plants grown up, and their daughters polished and set

set forth with ornaments, and there be no complaining in the streets; think themselves happy, and regard not what becomes of religion, and of Christs cause and interest in the Churches; take not to heart the afflictions of Gods people, if their trading increase; one good bargain will more comfort them than all the calamities of the Church can grieve them; they can hear and speak of the breaches and ruines of *Sion*, as the *Athenians* did of news, without remorse, or regard. Brethren, it is a weighty matter to read letters, and receive intelligence in them concerning the state of the Churches. You had need to lift up your hearts to God, when you are about to read your letters from our native Country, to give you wisdom, and hearts duly affected, that you may receive such intelligences as you ought. For God looks upon every man, in such cases, with a jealous eye; observing with what workings of bowels they read or speak of the concernments of his Church. You see, in *Amos* 6. 6. how his wrath was in-

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censed

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censured against those who solaced themselves with their private prosperity, but were not sick, their hearts ached not, *for the affliction of Joseph.* 3. They know that, if they withdraw from being helpful to the Church, God will do good to his Church without them; but he will be avenged upon them that desert or neglect his cause and people. This Argument *Mordecai* used to *Hester*, in *Hest.* 4. 13, 14. and it prevailed mightily with her to run the utmost hazard of her own Person, when there might be hope of some good to the Church thereby, *ver.* 16. For the contrary, *Meroz* was cursed by the Angel of the Lord, *because they came not to the help of the Lord against the mighty,* *Judg.* 5. 23. Though men cannot help the Lord, essentially or personally, yet they may be said to help him, relatively, in his cause and people, when they own his cause and people, and appear on that side, when Satan and his instruments raise persecutions and reproaches against them : Though the Lord needs not mens help,  
in



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in such cases ; for, when he saw that there was no man, no intercessor, his own arm brought salvation unto him, *Isa. 51. 16.* Yet it is our duty to shew on whose side we stand. For Christ will look on them as his enemies that disown his cause and people, at such times, as he saith, *He that is not with me, is against me, Mat. 12. 30.* Are the people and ways of God under reproach ? Christ is reproached in them and with them, *Rom. 15. 3.*

*Object.* Ah ! but they are called fools and fanaticks ? *Ans.* When was

it otherwise ? *Bernard*  
*Bern. de conf. ad Eugen. lib. 4.* complained of the like, in his time ; *Ipsa Religio in opprobrium venit, & timor Do-*

*mini simplicitas reputatur, ne dicam, fatuitas.* That is, Religion it self comes into reproach, and the fear of God is accounted simplicity, that I say, not folly. And, before him,

*August. de Verb. Dom.* *Augustine* describes the *scotts* and *frumps* of luke-warm professors against the zeal of those

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that were fervent in spirit, serving  
the Lord, *Quid insanis? aiumt nimis est. Nunquid alii non sunt Christiani? Ista stultitia est, dementia est.* That is, *Why art thou mad? say they, your zeal is too much. What? are none Christians but you? That is folly, it is fanaticness.* And, before his time, long, how were the ancient Christians in the Ten Persecutions, 300 years after Christ, traduced, reproached! *Rev. 12. 10.* Before that, in the Apostles dayes, Paul saith of himself, and the rest, *we are fools for Christs sake, &c. 1 Cor. 4. 10.* and, *if we be besides our selves, it is to God, 2 Cor. 5. 13.* Peter and John esteemed it a grace to be disgraced for Christ, *Acts 5. 41.* Christ well knew how cross to the natural affection of all men reproach and disgrace is; therefore he, to arme his Disciples against it, shews them the happiness they should have by suffering reproaches and revilings, for his sake, and the Gospel, *Mat. 5. 11, 12.* and the woful issue of declining it, *Mar. 8. 28.* Christ added, as a motive, to encourage his  
Dis-

Disciples in suffering reproaches, that so persecuted they the Prophets, *Mar. 5. 12.* which of the Prophets escaped sharp tryal, this way? yea, *David* himself, though a King, was despised by *Michael* for his zeal in bringing home the Ark, and dancing before it, with his head uncovered, as one of the vain persons, said she: but *David* was so far from being discouraged thereby, that his zeal was more inflamed, and his resolution increased; it was before the Lord, said he, which chose me before thy Father, &c. And I will be yet more vile than thus, and will be base in mine own sight, &c. *2 Sam. 6. 21, 22.* I have spoken thee more largely unto this, because the present temptation of this time, in the other afflictions of the Churches, is the reproachful titles put upon the people of God, whom prophane men call *Phanaticks*. But, if he is a fool that will be laughed out of his coat; much more is he a fool, and a mad man, that will suffer himself to be laughed out of heaven, that will hazard the loss of his soul, and sal-

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vation to free himself from the mocks and scoffs of a prophane and sinful World. If Christ had not, for our sakes, *endured the Cross, despising the shame*, we could never have been redeemed and saved; *let us go forth therefore unto him, without the Camp, bearing his reproach, Heb. 13. 13.* In the same Epistle, the Christian Hebrews are exhorted to call to remembrance the former dayes, in which, after they were illuminated, they endured a great fight of afflictions, partly, whilest they were made a gazing stock, both by reproaches, and afflictions; and partly, whilest they became companions of them that were so used, *Heb. 10. 32, 33.* Let us do likewise, and own the reproached and persecuted people and cause of Christ in suffering times: With-hold not countenance, entertainment, protection, from such, if they come to us, from other Countreys, as from France or England, or any other place. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained Angels unawares. Remember them that

*that are in bonds , as bound with them , and them which suffer adversity , as being your selves also in the body , Heb. 13. 2, 3. The Lord required this of Moab , saying , Make thy shadow , as the night in the midst of the noon day , i. e. provide safe and comfortable shelter and refreshment for my people , in the heat of persecution and opposition raised against them , hide the out-casts , bewray not him that wandereth: Let mine out-casts dwell with thee Moab , be thou a covert to them from the face of the spoiler , Isa. 16. 3, 4. Object. But so I may expose my self to be spoyled or troubled ? He therefore , to remove this objection , addeth , for the danger is at an end , the spoiler ceaseth , the treaders down are consumed out of the land. While we are attending to our duty , in owning and harbouring Christs witnesses , God will be providing for their and our safety , by destroying those that would destroy his people. Two helps I shall propound , to arm you against those fears of reproach , or dangers ,*

whereby men are apt to be drawn to  
 flinch from the cause and witnesses of  
 Christ, in suffering times. 1. Streng-  
 then your faith. A light of the invisible  
 God, and an eye to the recompence  
 of reward so quickned and streng-  
 thened the faith of *Moses*, that he  
 chose rather to suffer affliction with  
 the people of God, than to enjoy the  
 pleasures of sin for a season: esteem-  
 ing the reproach of Christ greater ri-  
 ches, than the treasures of *Agypt*,  
*Heb.* 11. 25, 26. And, as faith will  
 strengthen you hereunto, so faith will  
 be strengthened hereby, in your pray-  
 ers against being lead into temptation,  
 and left unto scandalous evils, that  
 might expose you to just reproach.  
 Therefore *David* having put up this  
 request to God, that none that wait  
 on God and seek him should be a-  
 shamed or confounded for his sake,  
 urgeth this, as an Argument, to  
 strengthen his faith; *Because for thy*  
*sake I have born reproach, shame*  
*hath covered my face, Psal.* 69. 5.  
 6, 7. 2. Exalt God, as the highest  
 object of your fear. Fear God, as he  
 ought

ought to be feared, fear him above all. The greater fear will expel the lesser. Therefore the Lord prescribes this fearing him aright, as the best remedy against all carnal fears, whereby men are wont to be hindred from obeying God in those duties that will expose men to hurt from the creature, *Isa.* 8. 12, 13. and *Chap.* 51. 7, 8. 12, 13. So doth Christ, in *Mat.* 10. 28. The balking of any duty, which God commandeth, is the ready way to bring upon you, by the wrath of God, that very evil, which you fear that the doing of your duty will expose you to, by the wrath of men. This was that Argument, which the Prophet *Jeremy* used, to *Zedekiah*, in *Jer.* 38. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23. Because he, fearing lest the *Jews*, that were fallen to the *Caldeans*, should deliver him into their hand, and they should mock him; by disobeying the Commandment of God, brought upon himself, as a just punishment from the wrath of God, the thing which he feared.

2. The next thing to be shewn, for your instruction, is, how they that are so qualified should exercise this hope, in reference to the publick concerns of the Churches, in this their low and afflicted condition. For this purpose I shall propound two directions.

1. See that you lay a sure foundation of this hope, a firm ground-work for this hope to be built and exercised upon; faith in God as his Churches portion, is this ground-work. Therefore, let the eye of your faith, through the glass of the word, look unto God, in this case; as *Jehosaphat* did, in *2 Chron. 20. 12.* *We have no might against this great Company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee.* Look not so much with the eye of sense downward, and round about you, as with the eye of faith upward, and into the scripture-promises. There, if the Lord open your eyes, you shall see that more are with the Church, and cause, and people of God, than can be against them. This course

*David.*



-David took, and was comforted, even when he was surrounded with dangers, *Psal. 25. 15. Mine eyes are ever towards the Lord*, said he, *for he shall pluck my feet out of the net.* That your faith in God may be strengthened in the hour of temptation, in the time of *Joseph's* afflictions; consider three things; 1. Christ his interest of propriety in the Churches of the Saints. For the Church is Christs Vineyard. *The Vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the house of Israel, Isa. 5. 7.* Solomons Vineyard in *Baal-haman* was the choicest parcel of his Lands. Christs Vineyard is the chiefest part of his inheritance in the World. *Solomon let forth his Vineyard to keepers.* But of this Vineyard, his Church, Christ saith, *My Vineyard which is mine, is before me, Cant. 8. 11, 12.* Christ doth not let forth his Vineyard unto Keepers, but himself keeps it under his own eye continually. Indeed, when his Vineyard answers not his cost and pains bestowed upon it, but, *when he looketh that it should bring forth grapes*

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grapes, it brings forth wild grapes;  
then, he will take away the hedge  
thereof, and break down the wall  
thereof, and then it shall be eaten up,  
and trodden down, *Isa. 5. 4, 5.* then  
the boar out of the Wood will waste it,  
and the wild beast of the field will de-  
vour it, for a time, till God attain  
his end, in their repentance and a-  
mendment; and then he will be in-  
treated to return, and look down from  
heaven, and behold and visit this Vine,  
*Psal. 80. 13, 14.* And when it be-  
comes a Vineyard of red wine, hol-  
ding forth the value and vertue of the  
blood of Christ, in their faith and  
obedience, see what he saith of it: *I*  
*the Lord do keep it, I will water it*  
*every moment; least any hurt it, I*  
*will keep it night and day, Isa. 27.*  
*2, 3.* 2. The Church is Christs house,  
the house of the living God, *1 Tim.*  
*3. 15.* an house which cost him more  
then all the silver, and gold, and  
precious stones in the world will a-  
mount unto. For God purchased the  
Church with his blood, *Acts 20. 27,*  
*28.* Christ is the builder and gover-  
nor

- nor of it, *Heb.* 3. 3, 6. and therefore he will see to it, when it suffers any hurt, that it be repaired, and kept in repair. 3. The Church is Christs Kingdom, which God will maintain against all rebels, as you see at large, in the second Psalm. 4. The Church is Christs spouse, and therefore nearer and dearer to him than any other society in the World, *At his right hand stands the Queen in gold of Ophir, Psal.* 45. 9. as Solomon set his Mother at his right hand, to shew that she was next to him, and above all other subjects. *Abasueros* his wrath was so incensed against *Haman*, for plotting against his Queen, and her people, that he determined evil against him; and when he saw him fallen on the bed whereon *Hester* was (though he did it to make request for his life) his wrath so boiled up to the height, that he said; *will he force the Queen also before me in the house?* Then they covered *Hamans* face, and, at the Kings command, hanged him upon the Gallows which he had prepared for *Mordocai*, as

206 *The Saints Anchor-hold,*  
you may see in the 7th. Chapter of  
*Hester*. The love of Christ to the  
Church, which is his Spouse, infi-  
nitely exceeds the love of *Ahasuerus*  
to *Hester*. Therefore they consult mi-  
sery and ruine to themselves and their  
families, who plot against the Church.  
And woe to them that would force the  
Church to their own wills and devices,  
contrary to the mind of Christ. 5.  
The Church is Christs body and ful-  
ness; Christ hath not his fulness  
without his Church. God hath put all  
things under Christs feet, and hath  
given him to be the Head over all  
things to the Church, which is his bo-  
dy, the fulness of him that filleth  
all in all, Eph. 1. 22, 23. Hence  
he sympathiseth with them. In all  
their afflictions he is afflicted, Isa. 63.  
9. and what is done against them, is  
done against him. *Saul, Saul, why*  
*persecutest thou me?* Acts 9. 4. As  
when the least toe is trodden upon, the  
head, by the tongue, cries, why do  
you hurt me? you see what Christs  
interest of propriety in his Church is,  
*i.e. the greatest that can be. For it is his*  
*Vine.*

*-Vineyard, yea, more, his house, yet higher, his Kingdom, yet dearer, his spouse, and dearer yet, his own body. And, you know, propriety is of great force with all, to use all their wisdom and power to maintain and preserve their interest. Much more will Christ vindicate his own interest of propriety in his Church against all opposers of it. 2. Consider the Covenant, whereinto God hath taken his Church and people ; together with the promises, that, as so many branches of the Covenant, belong unto them thereby . God saith unto his Church, I swear unto thee, and entered into a Covenant with thee, and thou becamest mine, Ezek. 16. 8. and of God it is said ; he will ever be mindful of his Covenant, Psal. III. 5. Upon this ground the faith of the Church was strengthened, when they were in a very low and forlorn state, to plead with God ; Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not ; thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer, thy Name is from*

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from everlasting, Isa. 63. 16. and again, in verse 19. *We are thine, thou never bearest rule over them, thy Name was not called upon of them.* The promises that belong unto the Church and people of God, under this relation, are innumerable. I shall touch upon two or three, that are suitable unto them, in reference to the opposition of their enemies, Psal. 37. 12, 13. *The wicked plotteth ( or practiseth ) against the just, and gnasheth at him with his teeth. The Lord shall laugh at him, (that is, shall render him ridiculous, and contemptible to others, as he plots to make the Church be unto the world ) for he seeth that his day is comming.* By his day, is meant, his dismal day, the day of his calamity, the day appointed of God for his punishment, the destruction, the day when their iniquity shall have an end. Such a day is comming upon them : Therefore it is added, in verse 17. *For the arms of the wicked shall be broken ; but Jehovah upholdeth the righteous. Behold, (saith the Lord.) I will make Jerusalem a Cup of trembling, unto all*  
*men* peo-

*in all Storms and Tempests. 203*

*people that besiege it round about, Zac.*

12. 2. The besiegers of *Jerusalem*, the Church of God, think they may as easily swallow it up, as a man may drink a cup of wine, and it is as delightful unto them to do so; but they shall find it a cup of giddiness, a drink too strong for them; yea, a cup of poyson, that will cast them into a drunken sleep, out of which when they shall be awakened, horror, astonishment, trembling shall seize upon them. It is added, in *verse*

3. *And in that day, I will make Jerusalem a burdensome stone, for all people; all that burden themselves with it, shall be cut in pieces; though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.*

It is folly for any one to lift a stone, that being too heavy for him to manage, will fall upon him and break his bones. Such a stone shall all that lift at the Church to remove it out of its place, find it to be unto themselves. The Lord Jesus, to whom all power in heaven and earth is given, hath said, speaking of *Peters* confessing him

to

to be the Christ, the Son of the living God, with a divine faith, such as is wrought by the Revelation of the Father) *upon this Rock I will build my Church; and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it, Mat. 16. 16, 17, 18.* The gates of Hell, signifie all the power and policy of the Devil, and all his instruments, they shall not prevail against Christs Church, taken indefinitely. He will preserve his Church, in one place or other in the World, maugre all their malice. These, and the like promises, are *the streams*, which, flowing from that river, the Covenant of Grace, *make glad the City of God*, which is his Church, even when *the waters roar, and the mountains are shaken with the swelling thereof, Psal. 46. 3, 4.* That is, whatever changes of government are caused by the fury of a tumultuous multitude, stirred up by Satan and his instruments against the Church & people of God.

3. Consider the presence of God in Christ with his Church, in their lowest and most afflicted condition; according to Christs promise to them,

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being taught to observe and do what he hath commanded ; *Lo , I am with you alway , even unto the end of the world , Mat. 28. 20.* This serves to strengthen the faith of Gods people concerning the Church , in her lowest and most afflicted estate ; that God is in the midst of her ; she shall not be moved , God will help her , at the looking forth of the morning , *Psal. 46. 5.* It is night with the Church , when the nations make a noise and the Kingdoms are moved ; as it is said in the next verse ; yet , even then , the Churches faith in God , as their portion , being quickened and strengthened , they say , *Jehovah of Hosts is with us ; the God of Jacob , an high refuge for us , Selah : ver. 7.* Therefore , that this consideration may the better serve to strengthen our faith , I shall shew you sundry Representations of Gods presence with his people in their lowest , and most afflicted condition , which the Scripture holdeth forth unto us. Unto *Abraham* it was represented , under a double similitude : 1. Of fowls com-  
ing

212 *The Saints Anchor-Hold,*  
*ming down upon the carcasses, about*  
*to be sacrificed, and Abrahams dri-*  
*ving them away, Gen. 15. 11. which*  
*represented the Egyptians, and all*  
*enemies of the Church, which di-*  
*sturb the people of God in their reli-*  
*gious duties of Gods worship, and*  
*they seek to devour the people of God,*  
*as Kites or Eagles, &c. devour carcaf-*  
*ses, and Gods presence and readi-*  
*ness to drive them away. 2. Of a*  
*smoaking furnace and a burning lamp,*  
*verse 17. The smoaking furnace, notes*  
*great afflictions, fiery tryals, which*  
*shall befall the Israel of God. The*  
*burning lamp, signifieth that God in*  
*Christ is with them, at such times, to*  
*save them, Isa. 62. 1. Unto Moses*  
*it was represented under the appearing*  
*of the Angel of God in a flame of*  
*fire out of the midst of a bush, the*  
*bush burned with fire, and the bush*  
*was not consumed. Isa. 3. 2. This*  
*Moses looked at as a great sight; and*  
*so may we. For, the bush, is the*  
*Church of God, which is burned with*  
*fiery tryals: But whence is it that it*  
*is not consumed? It is not from the*  
*im-*

impotency of the fire to burn the bush, nor from the strength of the bush to resist the fire, but from the presence of God in Christ, as appears, *ver. 6, 7, &c.* To *Ezekiel* it was represented under the similitude of a *valley*, wherein were many bones, and they very dry, *Ezek. 37. 2.* The valley signified the low estate of the Church, the many dry bones denoted the discouraging apprehensions the people of God have, when they look upon the power of the enemies, and their own weakness, with the eye of sense, for so the Lord said, in *verse 11.* Behold, they say, our bones are dried, and our hope is lost, we are cut off for our parts: Yet the Lord to quicken their faith, promiseth a resurrection to them. Another resemblance of Gods presence with his Church and people, in the midst of their greatest afflictions, we have in those three companions of *Daniel*, who were cast bound into the midst of the fire, yet the fire had no power upon their bodies, not so much as to singe their hair, or to change their coats. The reason of it was

214 *The Saints Anchor-Hold,*  
was, because the Son of God was  
with them, *Dan. 3. 25.* Unto *Za-*  
*chary* another resemblance hereof  
was presented; he saw, by night a  
man riding upon a red horse, and he  
stood among the myrtle trees, that  
were in the bottom, *Zach. 1. 8.* The  
night, is the time of affliction; the  
Bottom, is the low condition of the  
Church, which is likened unto myrtle  
trees, for its sweet savour unto God.  
And, in this low afflicted estate,  
Christ is with them, riding upon a red  
horse, as ready to fight against those  
that afflicted his Church, for whom he  
intercedes and receives gracious an-  
swers. Again, in *Zach. 12. 2, 3.* the  
Lord fore-told that he would make  
*Jerusalem a Cup of trembling to the*  
*besiegers*, who thought they could as  
easily swallow them up, as one may  
drink a cup of wine, and they would  
do the one with as much pleasure as  
the other: But, saith the Lord, the ef-  
fects of this cup shall be trembling and  
astonishment in you. And, in *ver. 3.*  
he saith, he will make *Jerusalem a*  
*burdensome stone to all people that are*

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gathered together against it ; they shall be cut in pieces. Then they will see cause to wish they had never burdened themselves with it. Thus you see, upon what firm grounds the faith of Gods people concerning the good purposes to God towards his Church, in their lowest, and most afflicted condition, may be strengthened and settled.

2. This ground-work being thus laid, build and exercise this hope upon it, in its suitable operations, and works.

1. In its purging work : For, he that hath this hope purgeth himself, 1. *Joh.* 3.3. Then we work with God, when we improve Gods means to Gods end. Gods end, in afflicting his Church, is, not to destroy it, but to purge it. So he saith, in *Isa.*

1. 25, 26. *I will turn mine hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy drosse ; and take away all thy rinn. And I will restore thy Judges as at the first , and thy Councillors as at the beginning ; afterward thou shalt be called the City of righteousness-*

216 *The Saints Anchor-Hold,*  
*reconfress, the faithful City.* There  
he compares the afflictions of his  
Church and people to the fire where-  
into Gold and Silver is cast, which lo-  
seth nothing thereby, but its dross  
and tinne ; but the metal it self is  
thereby made more pure and fit for  
honourable uses, and services. In the  
27th. Chapter, the 8. and 9. verses,  
the same is expressed under two other  
metaphors: 1. Of an Husband-man ,  
or Vine-dresser. *In measure, and*  
*in the branches, wilt thou debate with*  
*it;* as the Husband-man or Vinecoome,  
doth not stock up the roots, to destroy  
the fruit trees and Vines, but onely  
lopp them, and prune them, by ta-  
king away their luxuriant and super-  
fluous branches; that so they may be-  
come more fruitful.

2. Of stormy winds. He instan-  
ceth in the East-wind, which is hurt-  
ful to the trees and corn, in those hot  
Eastern Countreys, by blasting them,  
*Gen. 41. 6.* by its scorching heat  
whence the *Gracians* call it *εγιοτωση*,  
yet the Lord saith, he will so order it,  
that no hurt shall redound to his  
Church;

Church and people by it, but, by *this* shall the iniquity of *Jacob* be purged, and this shall be all the fruit, to take away his sin. Now, seeing this is Gods end and way; let all the Churches and people of God, act accordingly, in this time of *Jacobs* troubles, looking up to God in Christ for the assistance of his Holy Spirit, to make this use of his afflicting providences, to be awakened and excited to purge, first, their own hearts, then, the Churches, more fully and perfectly. It is no true policy, but folly, in such times, to seek and escape from troubles and dangers, by compliance with the inventions of men, and customes of degenerate Churches and Christians, in the matters of Religion. For that is the ground of Gods controversy with his people, for which he testifieth against them, with so strong and open rebukes. But account the fear of God to be the head-point and beginning of wisdom. Till men exercise the fear of God, in all their wayes, they do not begin to act wisely. This point of true wisdom God

taught *Iofua*, when he was exceedingly dejected, in *Josh. 7. 10. to 14.* and the Church, in captivity practised accordingly. For they confessed that their sorrows and sufferings were the effects of their sins; and therefore resolved to *search and try their wayes and turn again to the Lord*; and then, having removed the impediments, their hope was quickned to *lift up their hearts with their hands unto God*; in the heavens, *Lam. 3. 39, 40, 41.* *Shecaniah* also, observing how the hearts of Gods people were prepared to seek reconciliation with God, confessed that they had trespassed against God, in the particular sin discovered to them, and added; *yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing.* And thereupon inferred, *Now therefore let us make a Covenant with our God, &c.* and encouraged *Ezra* to act vigorously for reformation, *Ezra 10. 2, 3, 4.* The like course the Church resolved to take, upon encouragement of the like hope in *Hos. 6. 1, 2, 3.* This course we also must take, in this hour of temptation, if  
we



we would have a good issue of these afflicting dispensations, which are upon us.

2. Exercise this hope in its quickening and encouraging work. For this hope is a *lively hope*, 1 Pet. i. 3. It is very dishonourable to God and uncomely for Christians to be despondent and discouraged, in such times of tryal. The time of *Jacobs* tryal should be the time of *Jacobs* trusting in God. So did the Church, when the enemies insulted, in *Mich.* 7, 8.

*Rejoyce not against me, O mine enemy; when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me.* Two objections are wont to arise in the minds of Gods people in such times, to weaken their hope in God, you have them both in the answer of *Gideon* to the Angel, who said unto him, *the Lord is with thee*, *Judg.* 6. 12, 13. And *Gideon* said unto him, *oh, my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all the miracles which our Fathers told us of?* These are the two temptations which,

if they be not scattered, will hinder the exercise of this hope. 1. *If God be with us, why then is all this befallen us?* Therefore to arm you, consider, that these two, Gods presence with his people, and calamities incumbent upon them, may well consist together. For wise and holy ends God suffers extream calamities to befall his Churches and people, before he reacheth forth his hands to deliver them. Particularly, he thus dispenseth: 1. That he may thereby convince them of the vanity of those creature-props, whereupon they are wont to rely too much, and to purge carnal confidence out of them. This was the great sin of the people of *Israel*, to trust in the shadow of *Egypt*, and to rely upon *Affyria*, though they were forewarned that *Egypt* would be a broken reed, which would rather hurt then help them; therefore, saith the Lord, *have I cryed to her; their strength is to sit still, Isa, 30. 6, 7,* that is, to renounce their creature dependences, and to expect salvation from God alone, according to *Moses* his exhortation,

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tation, in *Exod.* 14. 13. Put they continually disobeyed God herein, till the Lord had convinced them of their sin and folly, by their Captivity in *Babylon*, from which no creature could deliver them. Then, when God by affliction had wrought their hearts to an humble frame, and to repentance, they express it, in reference to this sin, particularly, saying, *Ashur shall not save us, we will not ride upon horses, &c. for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy, Hos.* 14. 3. The like controversie God hath with his Churches and people, at this day, for their trusting too much in the arm of flesh, in the Parliament, in the Army, or in the Protector; and thereupon became carnally secure and wanton, and slight, when they had such props to stay upon, and answerably dejected and almost discouraged, when they failed them. The Lord awaken and humble his people for it, and cause their eyes, for the future, to be towards him alone. 2. That his people may see him in his glory, and glorifie him alone for their deliverances, he brings

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them unto a seemingly forlorn condition, and helpless, to the eye of sense. So in *Isa. 33. 9, 10.* *The earth mourneth and languisheth; Lebanon is ashamed and withered; Sharon is like a Wilderness; and Bashan and Carmel. All things fail: Now will I rise, Now will I be exalted; saith the Lord; Now will I lift up my self.* Mans extremity is Gods opportunity.

3. That, Gods faithfulness in his promise may be glorified. For so he hath promised in *Deut. 32. 36.* *The Lord shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone, &c.* And, in *Pf. 12. 5.* *For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord, I will set in salvation, he shall have breathing.* You see how low they are brought, they are poor and needy, and oppressed, so, as they dare not make complaints openly, but sigh and groan secretly. This is the time when God promiseth to rise up, and to give salvation to them. And, to shew that this is Gods  
con-

constant way, in performing his promise, the Psalmist addeth his *probaturum est* to it, in the next verse; the sayings of *Jehovah*, that is, his promises, and, in particular, those that are of this import and concernment, are pure sayings; as silver tryed in a subliming furnace of earth, fined seven times; that is, the Saints have, by constant experience, found the truth and faithfulness of God in performing them. 4. That thus God may raise and heighten the esteem of his favours in the hearts of his people, when they are beyond and above their expectation. This effect followed the return of the people of God from their Captivity in *Babylon*, *Psal.* 126. 1, 2, 3. *When Jehovah returned the Captivity of Sion; we were like them that dream;* that is, it was so far above our thoughts, that we questioned whether it was true, or no, as *Peter* did, in *Acts* 12. 9. *Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with joyful shouting. This did so raise their joy and thanksgiving to*

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God, that it brake forth into shooting. The very heathens admired and said, *God hath done great things for them.* Much more were themselves affected, and therefore they added, *Jehovah hath done very great things for us, we are joyful.* 5. That, by such dispensations, their faith and obedience may be more fully tryed and perfected. It is said of Christ, that, *though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience, by the things which he suffered, Heb. 5. 8.* that is, by his sufferings, he had the experimental knowledge of that mediaturly obedience, which he, as our surety, was to perform; which is noted in *Phil. 2. 8.* So the Churches of Christ are brought low, that they may learn experimentally, suffering obedience, which is the highest obedience of faith. They are brought into a widow-like condition, that, as *she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications, and prayers, night and day, 1 Tim. 5. 5.* so they may be disposed

posed suitably to Gods end, in afflicting them, who saith, *I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the Name of the Lord, Zeph. 3. 12.*

6. That they may be more fervent in prayer: this operation hope had in *David*, when he was brought so low that he said, *I looked on the right hand, and beheld, and no man acknowledged me, refuge is perished from me, no man seeketh for my soul.* This quickned and intended his fervency in prayer, *I cryed unto thee, Jehovah, and said, Thou art my refuge, my portion in the land of the living, Psal. 142. 4, 5.* Despair in the creatures help is oftentimes the ground of hope in God for help. For infinite goodness, accompanied with infinite wisdom and power, can never be at a loss, nor can faith and hope, which look at them, ever be at a stand. As God knows our souls in adversity, *Psal. 31. 7.* so we know God best in adversity. God is best seen in the Mount. To the second objection;

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*and where be all his Miracles, which*  
*our Fathers told us of? I shall speak*  
*briefly. It hath been sometimes that*  
*which hath troubled the Saints, That*  
*they see not such great things done*  
*for the Church in our days, as we*  
*read of in former times. But there is*  
*no cause for it. For the hand of the*  
*Lord is not shortened, nor is his*  
*Church lower in his esteem than for-*  
*merly. When the Lord had said by*  
*his Prophet, The people which were*  
*left of the sword found grace in the*  
*wilderness, Jerem. 31. 2. the people*  
*answered, Jehovah hath appeared of*  
*old: as if they should say, Truth,*  
*he did so in time past; those were*  
*good days indeed: but now those*  
*dayes are gone, we must look for no*  
*more of them. The Lord replied, Yea,*  
*I have loved thee with an everlasting*  
*love, therefore with loving kindness*  
*have I drawn thee, ver. 3. teaching us*  
*thereby to improve former Experi-*  
*ences, to the strengthening of our*  
*Faith for the present; and our hope,*  
*for the future. Experience is a multi-*  
*plied remembrance of former favours,*  
*and*



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and Blessings, which will help to multiply our Hope: For *Experience worketh Hope*, Rom. 5. 4. Hope encouraged by Experience, will encourage unto Prayer, *Psal.* 22. 4. Hence arose that pleading of Believers with God in Prayer, in *Isa.* 51. 9. *Awake, Awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord awake, as in the ancient dayes, in the Generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the Dragon of the Sea? Art thou not it which hath dryed the Sea?* V. 10. And fervent Prayer encreaseth and strengtheneth this Hope; Thus Christ teacheth us, in the Parable of the Widdow importuning the Unjust Judg, *Luke* 18. 6, 7, 8. *Joab* never put up a more acceptable Request unto *David*, than when he interceded for his banished *Absalon*. God is much more pleased to be petitioned for his afflicted Church, *Psal.* 122. 6. He is very ready to answer such Prayers with good Returns: For he saith, *Ask me of things to come, concerning my Sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me,* *Isa.* 45. 11.

3. Exercise

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3. Exercise this Hope in its strengthening work. In every Degree of the Exercise of this Hope there is an answerable Degree of Joy : *We rejoyce in tribulation under the hope of glory,* Rom. 5. 2, 3. and answerable to our joy in God will be our strength in God, *Neh. 8. 10.* Therefore let this Hope strengthen you, 1. *To cleave unto God with purpose of heart,* Acts 11. 23. It is good cleaving to him who will never leave nor forsake his People in their distress, *Heb. 13. 5, 6.* They that forsake God to cleave to other helpers, will find their Hopes disappointed, when they have most need of help ; Then God will say, *Where are their Gods, their rock in whom they trusted?* Deut. 32. 37. And they shall not know what to answer, but be ashamed of that which cannot profit nor deliver : for they are vain. When the people of God are in distress, wicked men will insult against them, and say, *Where is now their God?* Psal. 115. 2. But their answer is ready, *Our God is in the Heavens, he hath done whatsoever he pleased,* Ver. 3. They will be ready

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to say, Where are your Fastings? your Prayers? your confidence in God? The Answer is easie, they are with God in his Book of Remembrance: they are as seed sown in Heaven, whence we shall reap a plentiful crop of mercy in due time. But how easily may that be retorted upon them, in reference to God, and his People, which *Zebul* replied unto *Gaal*, in reference to *Abimelech*, in *Judg.* 9. 38. *Where is now thy mouth, which said, who is the Lord, that we should serve him? Is not this the People whom thou hast despised? Only be sure, if you would cleave to God, that you cleave to his Word, and every truth in it, when it is opposed by a sinful and unbelieving Generation: Contend for the Faith which was once given to the Saints, Jude 3.* *ἀνταγωνίζεσθαι* signifies, not simply to contend, but with all our might, and more, if it were possible. The thing to be contended for is, *the Faith*, not a Fancy, but the Truths received with Faith, upon Gods Authority in his Word, the least jot and tittle whereof God values at a higher

higher rate than Heaven and Earth, *Matth.* 5. 18. and the Martyrs of Jesus esteemed it above all worldly things, and above their Lives. And so should we. 3. This Faith was *once* delivered once for all. If it be lost, or exchanged for error, there is danger that it will be lost for ever, as we might prove by many examples of Apostates, who have become Infidels and Atheists. 4. This Faith was *delivered*, deposited, committed to our trust, of which a strict Account must be given how we have kept and used it.

There are *three* things which above all others God expects we should keep most carefully and faithfully from being wronged: 1. His own Name, which is put upon us. 2. His Church. 3. His Truths contained in Scripture, *2 Tim.* 1. 14. 5. This *Depositum* is committed to the Saints in common; not only to Ministers or Magistrates, but also to all Believers. It is the *common Faith*, wherein every Believer hath his interest in common with the rest; as all Planters or Inhabitants have in the Commons that belong to

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a Town, for which they will contend with any man that shall wrong them in that their interest. 6. *Salvation*, and this Faith are joyned, to teach us, to provide for our Salvation by keeping the Faith. Faith and Salvation are kept or lost together. 2. To wait patiently and constantly upon God, in doing and suffering his will: For God sometimes puts a long Date to the performance of his Promises. But Gods deferring is no empty space but a time of fitting his Church and People for the good things promised. Whiles Physick is working, the time is not lost, though health be not yet recovered: For, when the sick humor is purged out, then comes health, see *Isaiab* 30. 18. only be careful, that whilest you wait, you do not cross your Hope by sinning against him, upon whom you wait. True waiting is not a meer staying Gods leisure, but a continuing in a gracious inoffensive course, till the good waited for be attained.

F I N I S.